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THE BEST OF CARLYLE

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THE BEST OF CARLYLE

SELECTED ESSAYS AND PASSAGES

Carlyle, Thomas

Edited with Introduction and Notes
by

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INTRODUCTION

Current criticism asks the question: "Is Carlyle a contemporary?" Miss Mary Agnes Hamilton * replies that he is, that "he is nearer to the mind of today than he was to that of the age in which he wrote." Mr. Norwood Young † replies that Carlyle is mediæval, and that his influence, where it exists, is harsh, unlovely, anti-democratic, sinister. Such contradictory answers by intelligent and thoughtful students give one pause. They mean either that these two critics understand Carlyle differently or that they understand the twentieth century differently. They mean that the question cannot be answered absolutely. Probably the truest answer is that some of Carlyle's sayings are applicable in the twentieth century and that some are not, but that his vision of life as a mysterious and significant thing is likely to be contemporary as long as Dante and Shakespeare are read and as long as men continue to ponder over the riddles of the universe. The real question is perhaps not whether his opinions seem reasonable to the average Englishman or American of the twentieth century, but whether his emotions and thoughts still have power to stir readers. That Carlyle still does move readers, many readers, cannot be doubted. And since this is so, we should read Carlyle, should endeavor to enter into his mind and to see the universe as he saw it, and we may then accept or reject as we please, just as we accept or reject in our contemporaries what seems worthy or unworthy of our affection and study.

I

Carlyle's life falls into two parts. Almost half of it was lived in Scotland (1795-1834), enough to make him Scottish to the end of his days. His father was a suc-

* *Thomas Carlyle*, Chapter I.
† *Carlyle: His Rise and Fall.*

cessful mason and farmer, a man of powerful personality —serious, stern, strictly religious, gifted in speech. His mother, less vigorously intelligent and much gentler, was even more pious. The whole family was such a one as might have inspired "The Cotter's Saturday Night." To his early home and all its members the great son was tenderly loyal. After he had grown up, his relations with his mother were especially close; and the two quietly smoked many pipes together during his visits.

The boy was sent to schools in the neighborhood of his home, which was at Ecclefechan, Dumfriesshire. His shyness and a promise he had made his mother not to fight led to some persecution from older boys until his sufferings and his wrath goaded him into breaking his promise. He received his later education at Edinburgh, but the University apparently affected him less than might have been expected. His intellectual independence asserted itself early. He proved to be an excellent student, however, in mathematics and Latin.

After leaving Edinburgh in 1814 he tried teaching for a time, not too successfully. To the distress of his parents, he soon abandoned his earlier purpose of entering the ministry. Later he wrote articles for an encyclopædia, and for a time tutored the sons of a well-to-do and brilliant family. Gradually he found a place as a translator of German literature. His marriage in 1826 to Jane Welsh, an intelligent, witty, and high-spirited young woman, gave him a more solid social position and profoundly affected his emotional life. The quiet years at Craigenputtock, a farm remote from social or literary centers, between 1828 and 1834 were probably the most fruitful intellectually, though not the most productive, in his whole life.

The second half of Carlyle's life (1834-1881), spent in London, was strangely different from the early Scottish years. The success of *The French Revolution,* published in 1837, brought fame. His lectures were financially successful and enabled him and his wife to live in comfort, although he complained that he could "only gasp and stutter, a spectacle to gods and fashionables." The lectures on *Heroes and Hero-Worship* have been recognized

as among Carlyle's finest works. Besides these successes as writer and lecturer, Carlyle had in London the advantages of association with men and women of distinction in literary and social life. Tennyson, Browning, Mill, and Ruskin were among his friends.

Nevertheless the life in London, increasingly successful though it was, did not bring happiness. The problems of great masses of people crowded into cities pressed upon him, and he became bitter in contemplating the futile efforts of politicians to deal with the problems of poverty. The writing of his long books was to him a painful grind which aggravated the nervous dyspepsia that tormented him. Worst of all, there was for a time partial estrangement from the wife to whom he was devotedly attached and who never ceased to admire her husband. The unsatisfactory health of Mrs. Carlyle and Carlyle's irritable temperament were both responsible for the unhappy differences, which were particularly painful for a woman without an engrossing occupation.

At the death of Mrs. Carlyle in 1865 began Carlyle's prolonged and saddened old age. His writings almost completed, he brooded over the past. In his own words, he was "as good as without hope and without fear; a gloomily serious, silent, and sad old man, gazing into the final chasm of things in mute dialogue with Death, Judgment, and Eternity. (Dialogue mute on both sides.)"

Carlyle was born in the eighteenth century, and his youth was contemporary with the brief lives of Shelley, Keats, and Byron. Even in Scotland, where he was separated from the influences that dominated the lives of those young Englishmen, eighteenth century and romantic influences helped to form a character and mind that made him a man apart during the long years in London. He was born too soon to be subject to the scientific and religious tendencies of Victorian England; indeed, his influence was probably due to the fact that he did stand apart, that in an age of science and machinery he kept alive the faith in an abiding spiritual reality which came to him as part of his Scottish inheritance and which was reinforced by the romantic writers of Germany.

Like other aspects of Carlyle, his character has been

interpreted in various ways. Critics point to his colossal egotism and selfishness as his chief defect—a fault, by the way, of which the great are often accused. Proud he certainly was, from early youth when he was recognized by members of his family as a remarkable person; self-centered too, in the sense that he was always aware of himself, of his sufferings, whether great or small, whether of dyspepsia or of creation, for writing caused him agony. Pride and self-confidence, combined with an irritable disposition, made him intolerant toward those who might have been helpful friends, such as John Stuart Mill. In times of concentration upon his work, he was no doubt inconsiderate of his wife and others. He had a sharp tongue, and did not hesitate to express the passing emotions of irritation or contempt. But these faults, serious as they are, seem relatively insignificant to the reader of Carlyle's letters, which reveal a man of amazing tenderness and loyalty, not merely for members of his own family, but for many friends, and even for persons not friends at all. Could the man who inspired the following words, written by the slowly dying John Sterling, probably the best loved of all Carlyle's associates, have been other than a noble friend and a noble man as well: "I tread the common road into the great darkness, without any thought of fear, and with very much of hope. Certainty indeed I have none. With regard to You and Me I cannot begin to write; having nothing for it but to keep shut the lid of those secrets with all the iron weights that are in my power. Towards me it is still more true than towards England that no man has been and done like you. Heaven bless you! If I can lend a hand when THERE, that will not be wanting."

II

The heart of Carlyle is his religion. Understanding Carlyle's writings depends largely upon understanding the changes in his religious life and opinions. Fundamental is his early religious training, which influenced his entire life. His father was a member of a sect known as Burghers, who were strict dissenters. We may assume that Carlyle's religious training was of a severe Puritan

type, not unlike that in many a rural Methodist or Disciples home in the United States at the end of the nineteenth or the beginning of the twentieth century. When Carlyle went to the University of Edinburgh, just before he reached the age of fourteen, it was with the expectation of entering the ministry. No doubt it was the ardent wish of both parents, particularly of the mother, that caused the boy to choose this calling.

The next stage of Carlyle's religious development was his emancipation—to use a term now current in college circles—from the traditional belief of his parents and their church. Just how the change came about we do not know, but the reading of Hume, the famous Scottish sceptical philosopher, and of Gibbon, whose *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* treats Christianity with scant respect, did much to clinch his unbelief. Long afterwards Carlyle said that it was after reading Gibbon that he "first clearly saw that Christianity was not true," meaning of course orthodox Christianity. By the time he was twenty-two he was definitely separated from his early faith.

This loss of faith was a very painful experience—in part, no doubt, because of the difficulty of being frank with his parents about the matter. His failure to enter the ministry was in itself a severe blow to his mother, and he did all he could to spare her. His tenderness for her feelings is shown in a letter of 1819, in which he said: "I am rather afraid that I have not been quite regular in reading the best of books which you recommended to me. However, last night I was reading upon my favourite Job." His own inner life at this time was probably more influenced by Stoicism than by the Bible. Mr. D. A. Wilson * says that the clue to many a Carlylean "eccentricity" is in "the Stoicism of Epictetus and the best of the ancient sages." Life became to him something that demanded obedience to duty and patience in suffering, without hope of reward outside oneself. At this period he wrote: "Epictetus wrote that Enchiridion which may fortify the soul of the latest inhabitant of Earth." Although he soon began "to perceive that it is impossible

* Carlyle Till Marriage, p. 122.

to attain the solitary happiness of the Stoic," to quote his own words, the essentials of Stoicism, with its emphasis upon the character of the individual regardless of the discomfort or luxury of one's environment, formed a permanent element in his thinking.

That Stoicism, however helpful and even permanent its influence may have been, was not satisfactory is evident in Carlyle's sufferings, of which the classic expression is to be found in the chapter in *Sartor Resartus* entitled "The Everlasting No." The Everlasting No is of course the denial "of Life, of Purpose, of Volition" in the universe. What it means to Carlyle is shown in this sentence: "The Everlasting No has said, 'Behold thou art fatherless, outcast, and the Universe is mine (the Devil's)'; to which my whole Me now made answer: '*I* am not thine, but Free, and forever hate thee!'" The actual experience which this represents occurred in 1822; and by that time a new influence had entered his life—German literature and philosophy.

Carlyle began reading German about 1819, and in a very few years he had mastered the language. Soon he was reading Schiller, Goethe, Kant, Schelling, Fichte, and other German writers. Goethe became his acknowledged master, but it is not possible to disentangle the various threads of influence in such a way as to determine how much is really Goethe's and how much comes from another. By 1825, at any rate, he seems to have felt that he had recovered his faith in the sacredness of the universe. Of German philosophy it has been said, probably with some justice, that he had no real grasp. It will be sufficient to say that he became a philosophical idealist—that the material world became for him a vesture for a spiritual reality, that time and space were to him illusions or forms of thought, and that life had a lofty and divine meaning. This religion did not appear to him as Christian. When a friend complained that there was no personal God in *Sartor Resartus*, the book that represents best this stage in his religious development, he wrote in reply: "'Personal,' 'impersonal,' One, Three, *what* meaning can any mortal (after all) attach to those in reference to such an object?" And his faith in immortality, in so

far as he had any faith, seems to have been rather a belief that no good can be lost in a universe in which time is an illusion than any faith in a continued personal life following death. Nevertheless during most of his thirties Carlyle felt the glow of confidence and faith that shines through *Sartor Resartus*.

Shortly after Carlyle's removal to London, there was a change in his religious attitude. Just why one can hardly say. He was beginning to win in his struggle for money and fame. Perhaps it was dyspepsia that made the difference. Perhaps it was an inevitable development in his character, postponed by the solitary years at Craigenputtock, but brought on by his contact with the great world. Science, we may be sure, had nothing to do with it, for to the great scientific development of the nineteenth century Carlyle remained indifferent or coldly hostile. It is associated, probably, with his study of history, to which the remainder of his life was chiefly devoted. He seems to have grown harder, probably not in his personal sympathies, but in the views he expressed. The change is not only in his religious views, but also in his political and social opinions. The democratic tinge in him—faint enough already—disappeared. He became increasingly scornful of his fellowmen. God became more of an efficient ruler, whose rough justice controls the larger destiny of the world, but who is hardly concerned as to whether the individual does or does not get his breakfast. In other words, Carlyle's conception of God seemed to be derived from history, in which it is only in the long view that right prevails. His earlier God had something of the sympathy of Jesus, but henceforth God conformed more and more to the world of facts as Carlyle found it in history and in the England of his own day, a God working out a large purpose, but hardly concerned with individuals. And we are told that Carlyle once said to Tennyson regarding the immortality of the soul: "Eh, old Jewish rags, you must clear your mind of all that. Why should we expect a hereafter?"

Toward the end of his life, however, and after the loss of his wife, there may have been still another change

in Carlyle. There was a softening, perhaps a tendency to recur to the emotions and attitudes of his younger days. And there was certainly some hope of rejoining those he had loved and lost. In 1872 he wrote in his journal: "Close by lies the *Great Secret* but impenetrable (is, was, and must be so) to terrestrial thoughts forever more. Perhaps something! Perhaps *not* nothing, after all. God's will, there also, be supreme. If we are to meet! Oh, Almighty Father, if we are, but silence! silence!"

III

The changes in Carlyle's views of government and of society parallel to a certain extent the changes in his religious views. In earlier years social problems meant less to him than did religious problems, but as time passed the social aspects of his thinking became increasingly significant. A member of a peasant family, he should have sympathized with the workers of the world. And so he did, in early years and to the end, although his sympathy was mingled with increasing contempt. The distress, in Scotland as well as in England, that followed the close of the Napoleonic wars, caused Carlyle to reflect upon the inequalities of the world, and undoubtedly was an element in creating the spiritual despair that tormented his younger manhood. His own account of his feelings at the time of a radical revolt in Glasgow reveals his attitude. He says that one morning he "met a gentleman, an advocate, slightly of my acquaintance, hurrying along, musket in hand, towards 'the Links,' there to be drilled as an item of the 'gentlemen volunteers' now afoot. 'You should have the like of this,' said he, cheerily patting his musket. 'H'm yes; but I haven't yet quite settled on which side!' which probably he thought was quiz, though it really expressed my feeling."

Sympathetic as he was toward the masses, Carlyle had little faith in their power to govern themselves. The Reform Bill of 1832, which at least made England less aristocratic politically, interested him little. A year before the Bill was finally passed, he wrote: "Democracy has arisen, and will never lie down again, till it has got

its rights; the poor, blind monster for the present fancies that Liberty lies in the Elective Franchise." And after he had settled in London, where he must have been more intensely aware of human suffering than in the remoteness of Craigenputtock, his views of society became more gloomy. As in the case of his religious views, perhaps his historical studies and his tendency to place increased importance upon great men caused him to regard the masses with scorn. *Past and Present,* published in 1843, represents best his social opinions. He hoped to influence by this and other works not the masses, whom he regarded as incapable of serious thought, but the leaders, the statesmen or captains of industry perhaps, who must guide and if necessary compel the common folk in the way they should go. At the same time the reader must remember that Carlyle was particularly bitter against the idle artistocracy who had the rewards without knowing the responsibilities of leadership.

In his later years Carlyle became even more outspoken in his contempt for democracy. Negro slavery seemed to him a natural thing, for if one did not wish to work or did not know what to work at, he must be compelled. But the neglected and nominally free masses of workmen in England, suffering untold misery, and without a master to feel responsible for them, he regarded as evidence of a shameful state of civilization.

But in his philosophy of society as in his religion Carlyle stood for a spiritual view of the world. As Professor C. E. Vaughan* says, "He found a materialist and utilitarian philosophy in possession of the field. He threw himself single-handed against all its forces. He faced them with a raking fire of criticism and contempt. And when the smoke of battle had cleared off, it was evident that he had inflicted heavy loss upon the enemy; and, what is yet more important, that he had compelled his countrymen to reconsider their verdict, to recognize that materialism does not suffice to explain the tangled web of our experience."

* "Carlyle and His German Masters," in *Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association,* vol. I.

IV

Carlyle's longest works were historical, and his interest in history was lifelong. He read and was profoundly affected by Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* when he was a very young man. Hume's *History of England* was also familiar to him, and his letters refer to other historians. The theory of heroes, implied, according to Mr. D. A. Wilson, "in the Bible and Homer and Plutarch and many authors," and possibly "suggested by a fine passage where Sallust says the greatness of Rome was achieved by the supreme qualities of a few great men," evidently owes most to Fichte, the famous German philosopher. The following quotation from Fichte's *Staatslehre* will perhaps supply enough evidence: "To compel men to a state of Right, to put them under the yoke of Right by force is not only the right, but the sacred duty, of every man who has the knowledge and the power. In case of need, one single man has the right and duty to compel the whole of mankind; for to that which is contrary to Right they have, as against him, no right and no freedom." *

As might be expected, therefore, Carlyle's historical writing centers mainly about great personalities. In *The French Revolution,* Mirabeau, Danton, Napoleon, if not of the highest type of greatness, are still of colossal stature in a world of pygmies. Cromwell, with the Puritan iron in him that Carlyle understood so well, is an ideal Carlylean hero. In Frederick the Great he was less fortunate, for Frederick lacked the moral qualities for which Carlyle cared most. In his account of Frederick, too, Carlyle seems most indifferent to the fortunes of the masses for whom heroes exist, and comes nearest to the doctrine that might is right—a doctrine vehemently scorned in his earlier works. One recent writer † goes so far as to say that Carlyle's interpretation—or rather misinterpretation —of Frederick had much to do with the coming of the World War, for it encouraged the Germans to glory in

* Quoted by Vaughan, "Carlyle and His German Masters," p. 194.
† Mr. Norwood Young in his *Carlyle: His Rise and Fall.*

their military greatness and failed to warn the English of the subtle Machiavellianism in the statecraft of the great master of German statesmanship and military organization.

But again here the reader must remember that if one looks at Carlyle's long series of books about history and society, one sees that for Carlyle the true leader, whether poet or priest, or statesman, is a representative of what is most divine in the universe, and Carlyle's doctrine of might is right means only that in the long run the divine must be victorious. It is unfortunate that in his later writings Carlyle did not clearly distinguish between Fact and the Divine, and one wonders sometimes if his Divine may not be merely a cruel reality that must be accepted by helpless human beings.

Carlyle's methods of writing history have recently been attacked, particularly by Mr. Young in his *Carlyle: His Rise and Fall*. In spite of his vast researches, it is evident that he was often unfair to the scorned dryasdust historian upon whom he nevertheless depended, that he carelessly made misstatements about his sources, that his translations are often paraphrases, that he sometimes violated chronological order, that he made changes from his sources to obtain greater vividness. The modern reader must accept these defects, if defects they be, for Carlyle does not sacrifice essential truth. Mr. Young does indeed assert that Carlyle when part way through his life of Frederick discovered that he had been mistaken in his interpretation of his hero, who was really not a hero and was proving distasteful to him, and that he nevertheless decided to continue to the end with his heroic portrait in order to make an artistic whole and save his literary reputation at the sacrifice of the truth. But Mr. Young's evidence is slight. Mr. Elton's * observation about *The French Revolution* is nearer the truth and can be applied to the other histories: "He divined the nature of many of his personages better, we may almost say, than with his information he had a right to do." And of positive merits of glowing pictures, brilliant character interpretation, and deep human sympathies the books are full. They are not

* *A Survey of English Literature*, 1830-1880, p. 19.

histories in the modern sense; Carlyle's scorn of contemporary science and economics makes his histories only half historical to the modern student. But as literature, as representing superbly and with essential faithfulness the grand pageant of personages and events, they are unsurpassed in the English tongue.

V

Carlyle's literary criticism belongs to the earlier years when he was writing for the reviews. Much of it is about German writers—Goethe, Schiller, Novalis, Richter, and others—whose names he helped to make familiar in England. It has been noted that in writing on Goethe, Carlyle says little about the poems of the greatest of German poets, and in general he is interested more in prose or dramatic poetry than in lyric poetry. What appealed to him in the German writers was, first of all, their sense of the supernatural permeating the world. Carlyle's essays are packed with translated passages, and many of these have a mystical sense of the divine in the universe. Closely connected with his appreciation of the mystical is his sense of the moral. Carlyle's Puritanism appears in this, and it is probable that he puts some of his own morality into the authors whom he loves. For example, he praises Goethe's doctrine of renunciation, which was really a doctrine of renunciation of the lower in oneself for the sake of what is higher; in Carlyle it seems to be merely the Puritan feeling that renunciation is good for its own sake.

If Carlyle is less appreciative of French and English literature than of German literature, it is because of the lack in them of the qualities of mysticism and moral profundity. The essay on Burns, a peasant like himself, whose emotions and background he could understand, is an exception. But Walter Scott seemed to him merely to touch the surface of life, and the scepticism and rationalism of eighteenth century France as revealed in Voltaire or Diderot offended his deepest instincts. A humorist himself and a lover of *Tristram Shandy*, light banter about religion or morality was distasteful to him, and he

was relatively indifferent to the precision and delicacy of style of French writers.

Moreover, Carlyle never forgot the writer in his work. He emphasized biographical details, sometimes sentimental aspects of the life—the relations of his hero to parents or wife or sweetheart—but especially the development of the moral character. The purely literary aspects of literature —questions of style or structure—he usually ignored.

Nevertheless Carlyle has a notable place among English critics of literature. He goes to literature, not for pleasure merely, but for life. He brings his whole personality—his moral and religious instincts, his responsiveness to the majestic and the mysterious in man and nature, his sympathies with the simple emotions that are the root of all life, his interest in men and women as men and women, his delight in vigorous and telling utterance, his humor—to bear upon the work he is considering. He may lack subtlety of appreciation of the aesthetic side of literature, but he is deeply responsive to what he finds that is noble and human and wise.

VI

Carlyle's style is extraordinary—extraordinary for its merits and perhaps for its faults, though faults and merits are inseparable. The manner of Carlyle's earliest writings is conventional, though here and there, especially in the letters, evidence may be seen of the volcanic power that revealed itself in *The French Revolution*. But as soon as Carlyle gained the confidence which enabled him to express himself spontaneously, the special Carlyle manner quickly asserted itself.

Much has been said of the origin of this style. The terse figurative speech of his father undoubtedly contributed much. The humor, Froude says, came from his mother. The rhythms of the English Bible, familiar from earliest childhood, had their influence. Shakespeare's language, too, became part of him. From German writers, particularly from Richter, he may have absorbed certain traits of extravagance and humor. But essentially the style is Carlyle himself. W. C. Brownell, in an essay

on Carlyle * which reveals constantly its author's distaste for its subject, wrote: "His style is a perfect mirror of his mind. No writer's is so idiosyncratic—so intensely idiosyncratic. It illustrates not only all his traits but all his moods. It brings out into the starkest relief his defects as well as his qualities. It is terribly indiscreet and lays bare his caprice, his lack of deference, his defiance of discipline, his intoxicated irresponsibility. . . . Never was there such an instance of the faculty of expression running away from its possessor." But Brownell had already written: "In expression, however, perhaps prose has not had a greater master."

The style gives the impression of speech in an unusual degree—of speech that is varied, now tender and now bitter, usually loud and emphatic, and now and then rising into eloquence rarely found in English prose. The frequent use of capitals and italics increases the feeling of the reader that he hears a powerful voice. At first the style seemed to many of Carlyle's contemporaries to be affected or barbarous. A writer in the *Quarterly Review* called it "the eccentric expression of eccentricity." It is certainly not a style to be imitated by other writers, whether young or old. It does not have what Arnold called "the needful qualities of a fit prose . . . regularity, uniformity, precision, balance." It will forever be unpleasant to certain temperaments, temperaments that instinctively demand reserve, repose, reticence, and subtle suggestiveness; that resent vigorous, unrestrained, and passionate utterance. But its genuineness seems, to most twentieth century readers at least, unmistakable; it is the result of profound feeling rising into sincere and often profoundly poetic expression.

It is a humorous style. Brownell characterized the humor as artificial, but it certainly did not seem so to those who knew Carlyle's speech. If his humor is sometimes perverse, it is because Carlyle had perversity in him. After all, the humor consists largely of the Scottish exaggerations which he learned from his own family and perhaps from other associates of his youth. His letters show how keen was his appreciation of the oddities of

* In *Victorian Prose Masters.*

people, particularly the oddities of speech; and the oddities of his own language, including sometimes more than a touch of grotesqueness, are founded on a genuine appreciation of the odd and the grotesque. His Germanized words and constructions, his incomplete sentences, his far-fetched allusions, his daring metaphors and strange epithets, are often but manifestations of his pervading humor.

His style is concrete. This is apparent in his descriptive passages, particularly in his descriptions of people, which are probably unsurpassed in English for vividness and power. Of his own father he said: "Nothing did I ever hear him undertake to render visible which did not become almost ocularly so." He had the same power. And this concreteness is present when he talks of abstract things. Professor MacMechan has called attention to a sentence from *Sartor Resartus:* "Our Professor's method is not, in any case, that of common school Logic, where the truths all stand in a row, each holding by the skirts of the other." The metaphor is a fine example of Carlyle's way of dealing with the abstract. Another example is his description of Teufelsdröckh's sentences, which become visible as one reads: "Of his sentences perhaps not more than nine-tenths stand straight on their legs; the remainder are in quite angular attitudes, buttressed-up by props (of parentheses and dashes), and ever with this or the other tagrag hanging about them; a few even sprawling out helplessly on all sides, quite broken-backed and dismembered." Obviously this is, in part, a humorous apology for his own style.

Finally, Carlyle's style is curiously suggestive. His vocabulary is rich, and his allusions are innumerable. His own knowledge was very great. His reading was tremendous, and he had a tenacious memory. The contents of his gigantic mind were poured into his writings without restraint, and his references are not always familiar to most readers. His obscurity, in so far as he is obscure, is almost wholly due to his allusiveness; for his thought is not difficult. Yet if the reader will take the pains to understand as he reads, he will find a fullness

of meaning that is rare, and he will know intimately one of the great personalities of English literature.

SELECTED READING LIST

The student who wishes to make a thorough study of Carlyle should consult *A Bibliography of Thomas Carlyle's Writings and Ana* (1928) by Isaac Walton Dyer.

A few recent books which indicate the present state of opinion about Carlyle, and the most useful older works on Carlyle, are listed below:

J. A. Froude, *Thomas Carlyle: A History of the First Forty Years of His Life,* 2 vols., 1882.

Thomas Carlyle: A History of His Life in London, 2 vols., 1884.

With all their faults of inaccuracy and occasional misrepresentation, these volumes make one of the great English biographies.

Richard Garnett, *Life of Thomas Carlyle,* 1887.

This is usually regarded as the best of the brief biographies.

John Nichol, *Thomas Carlyle,* E.M.L.S., 1892.

This volume contains useful criticism. The author is less biased, either for or against Carlyle, than most writers.

Bliss Perry, *Carlyle: How to Know Him,* 1915.

This is a valuable introduction to Carlyle. Many of the most famous passages are quoted.

Augustus Ralli, *Guide to Carlyle,* 2 vols., 1920.

These volumes contain careful analyses of Carlyle's works, critical comments, and useful biographical material.

D. A. Wilson, *Carlyle Till Marriage,* 1923.
Carlyle to "The French Revolution," 1924.
Carlyle on Cromwell and Others, 1925.
Carlyle at His Zenith, 1927.

Two volumes are to follow: *Carlyle on the Downhill of Life* and *Carlyle in Old Age.* The purpose of the author of this new biography of Carlyle is to correct and supersede Froude. The first volume is par-

ticularly fine, and it contains a great deal of new material.

Mary Agnes Hamilton, *Thomas Carlyle,* 1926.

A recent interpretation of Carlyle which attempts to prove his value for our time. It is thoughtful and well written.

Norwood Young, *Carlyle: His Rise and Fall,* 1927.

This is the most important destructive criticism of Carlyle that has appeared. The author's hostility to his subject makes him somewhat unscrupulous in the interpretation of facts, but the book is one not to be ignored.

Elizabeth Drew, *Jane Welsh and Jane Carlyle,* 1928.

Miss Drew comments upon the relations of Carlyle and his wife in a manner that is both sensible and entertaining.

BURNS

SELECTED ESSAYS

BURNS

[1828]

IN the modern arrangements of society, it is no uncommon thing that a man of genius must, like Butler, "ask for bread and receive a stone;" for, in spite of our grand maxim of supply and demand, it is by no means the highest excellence that men are most forward to recognize. The inventor of a spinning-jenny is pretty sure of his reward in his own day; but the writer of a true poem, like the apostle of a true religion, is nearly as sure of the contrary. We do not know whether it is not an aggravation of the injustice, that there is generally a posthumous retribution. Robert Burns, in the course of Nature, might yet have been living; but his short life was spent in toil and penury; and he died, in the prime of his manhood, miserable and neglected: and yet already a brave mausoleum shines over his dust, and more than one splendid monument has been reared in other places to his fame; the street where he languished in poverty is called by his name; the highest personages in our literature have been proud to appear as his commentators and admirers; and here is the *sixth* narrative of his *Life* that has been given to the world!

Mr. Lockhart thinks it necessary to apologize for this new attempt on such a subject: but his readers, we believe, will readily acquit him; or, at worst, will censure only the performance of his task, not the choice of it. The character of Burns, indeed, is a theme that cannot easily become either trite or exhausted; and will probably gain rather than lose in its dimensions by the distance to which it is removed by Time. No man, it has been said, is a hero to his valet; and this is probably true; but the fault is at least as likely to be

the valet's as the hero's. For it is certain, that to the vulgar eye few things are wonderful that are not distant. It is difficult for men to believe that the man, the mere man whom they see, nay perhaps painfully feel, toiling at their side through the poor jostlings of existence, can be made of finer clay than themselves. Suppose that some dining acquaintance of Sir Thomas Lucy's, and neighbour of John a Combe's, had snatched an hour or two from the preservation of his game, and written us a Life of Shakspeare! What dissertations should we not have had,—not on *Hamlet* and *The Tempest*, but on the wool-trade, and deer-stealing, and the libel and vagrant laws; and how the Poacher became a Player; and how Sir Thomas and Mr. John had Christian bowels, and did not push him to extremities! In like manner, we believe, with respect to Burns, that till the companions of his pilgrimage, the Honourable Excise Commissioners, and the Gentlemen of the Caledonian Hunt, and the Dumfries Aristocracy, and all the Squires and Earls, equally with the Ayr Writers, and the New and Old Light Clergy, whom he had to do with, shall have become invisible in the darkness of the Past, or visible only by light borrowed from *his* juxtaposition, it will be difficult to measure him by any true standard, or to estimate what he really was and did, in the eighteenth century, for his country and the world. It will be difficult, we say; but still a fair problem for literary historians; and repeated attempts will give us repeated approximations.

His former Biographers have done something, no doubt, but by no means a great deal, to assist us. Dr. Currie and Mr. Walker, the principal of these writers, have both, we think, mistaken one essentially important thing: Their own and the world's true relation to their author, and the style in which it became such men to think and to speak of such a man. Dr. Currie loved the poet truly; more perhaps than he avowed to his readers, or even to himself; yet he everywhere introduces him with a certain patronizing, apologetic air; as if the polite public might think it strange and half unwarrantable that he, a man of science, a scholar and gentleman, should do such honour to a rustic. In all this, however, we readily admit that his fault was not want of love, but weakness of faith; and regret that the first and kindest of all our poet's biographers should not have seen farther, or believed more boldly what he saw. Mr. Walker offends more deeply in the same kind: and both err alike

in presenting us with a detached catalogue of his several supposed attributes, virtues and vices, instead of a delineation of the resulting character as a living unity. This, however, is not painting a portrait ; but gauging the length and breadth of the several features, and jotting down their dimensions in arithmetical ciphers. Nay, it is not so much as that : for we are yet to learn by what arts or instruments the mind *could* be so measured and gauged.

Mr. Lockhart, we are happy to say, has avoided both these errors. He uniformly treats Burns as the high and remarkable man the public voice has now pronounced him to be : and in delineating him, he has avoided the method of separate generalities, and rather sought for characteristic incidents, habits, actions, sayings ; in a word, for aspects which exhibit the whole man, as he looked and lived among his fellows. The book accordingly, with all its deficiencies, gives more insight, we think, into the true character of Burns, than any prior biography : though, being written on the very popular and condensed scheme of an article for *Constable's Miscellany*, it has less depth than we could have wished and expected from a writer of such power ; and contains rather more, and more multifarious quotations than belong of right to an original production. Indeed, Mr. Lockhart's own writing is generally so good, so clear, direct and nervous, that we seldom wish to see it making place for another man's. However, the spirit of the work is throughout candid, tolerant, and anxiously conciliating ; compliments and praises are liberally distributed, on all hands, to great and small ; and, as Mr. Morris Birkbeck observes of the society in the backwoods of America, " the courtesies of polite life are never lost sight of for a moment." But there are better things than these in the volume ; and we can safely testify, not only that it is easily and pleasantly read a first time, but may even be without difficulty read again.

Nevertheless, we are far from thinking that the problem of Burns's Biography has yet been adequately solved. We do not allude so much to deficiency of facts or documents,—though of these we are still every day receiving some fresh accession,—as to the limited and imperfect application of them to the great end of Biography. Our notions upon this subject may perhaps appear extravagant ; but if an individual is really of consequence enough to have his life and character recorded for public remembrance, we have always been of opinion that the public ought to be made acquainted

with all the inward springs and relations of his character. How did the world and man's life, from his particular position, represent themselves to his mind? How did co-existing circumstances modify him from without; how did he modify these from within? With what endeavours and what efficacy rule over them; with what resistance and what suffering sink under them? In one word, what and how produced was the effect of society on him; what and how produced was his effect on society? He who should answer these questions, in regard to any individual, would, as we believe, furnish a model of perfection in Biography. Few individuals, indeed, can deserve such a study; and many *lives* will be written, and, for the gratification of innocent curiosity, ought to be written, and read and forgotten, which are not in this sense *biographies*. But Burns, if we mistake not, is one of these few individuals; and such a study, at least with such a result, he has not yet obtained. Our own contributions to it, we are aware, can be but scanty and feeble; but we offer them with good-will, and trust they may meet with acceptance from those they are intended for.

Burns first came upon the world as a prodigy; and was, in that character, entertained by it, in the usual fashion, with loud, vague, tumultuous wonder, speedily subsiding into censure and neglect; till his early and most mournful death again awakened an enthusiasm for him, which, especially as there was now nothing to be done, and much to be spoken, has prolonged itself even to our own time. It is true, the "nine days" have long since elapsed; and the very continuance of this clamour proves that Burns was no vulgar wonder. Accordingly, even in sober judgments, where, as years passed by, he has come to rest more and more exclusively on his own intrinsic merits, and may now be well-nigh shorn of that casual radiance, he appears not only as a true British poet, but as one of the most considerable British men of the eighteenth century. Let it not be objected that he did little. He did much, if we consider where and how. If the work performed was small, we must remember that he had his very materials to discover; for the metal he worked in lay hid under the desert moor, where no eye but his had guessed its existence; and we may almost say, that with his own hand he had to construct the tools for fashioning it. For he found himself in deepest obscurity, without help, without instruction, without model; or with models

only of the meanest sort. An educated man stands, as it were, in the midst of a boundless arsenal and magazine, filled with all the weapons and engines which man's skill has been able to devise from the earliest time ; and he works, accordingly, with a strength borrowed from all past ages. How different is *his* state who stands on the outside of that storehouse, and feels that its gates must be stormed, or remain forever shut against him ! His means are the commonest and rudest ; the mere work done is no measure of his strength. A dwarf behind his steam-engine may remove mountains ; but no dwarf will hew them down with a pick-axe ; and he must be a Titan that hurls them abroad with his arms.

It is in this last shape that Burns presents himself. Born in an age the most prosaic Britain had yet seen, and in a condition the most disadvantageous, where his mind, if it accomplished aught, must accomplish it under the pressure of continual bodily toil, nay of penury and desponding apprehension of the worst evils, and with no furtherance but such knowledge as dwells in a poor man's hut, and the rhymes of a Ferguson or Ramsay for his standard of beauty, he sinks not under all these impediments : through the fogs and darkness of that obscure region, his lynx eye discerns the true relations of the world and human life ; he grows into intellectual strength, and trains himself into intellectual expertness. Impelled by the expansive movement of his own irrepressible soul, he struggles forward into the general view ; and with haughty modesty lays down before us, as the fruit of his labour, a gift, which Time has now pronounced imperishable. Add to all this, that his darksome, drudging childhood and youth was by far the kindliest era of his whole life ; and that he died in his thirty-seventh year : and then ask, If it be strange that his poems are imperfect, and of small extent, or that his genius attained no mastery in its art ? Alas, his Sun shone as through a tropical tornado ; and the pale Shadow of Death eclipsed it at noon ! Shrouded in such baleful vapours, the genius of Burns was never seen in clear azure splendour, enlightening the world : but some beams from it did, by fits, pierce through ; and it tinted those clouds with rainbow and orient colours, into a glory and stern grandeur, which men silently gazed on with wonder and tears !

We are anxious not to exaggerate ; for it is exposition rather than admiration that our readers require of us here ;

and yet to avoid some tendency to that side is no easy matter. We love Burns, and we pity him; and love and pity are prone to magnify. Criticism, it is sometimes thought, should be a cold business; we are not so sure of this; but, at all events, our concern with Burns is not exclusively that of critics. True and genial as his poetry must appear, it is not chiefly as a poet, but as a man, that he interests and affects us. He was often advised to write a tragedy; time and means were not lent him for this; but through life he enacted a tragedy, and one of the deepest. We question whether the world has since witnessed so utterly sad a scene; whether Napoleon himself, left to brawl with Sir Hudson Lowe, and perish on his rock, "amid the melancholy main," presented to the reflecting mind such a "spectacle of pity and fear" as did this intrinsically nobler, gentler, and perhaps greater soul, wasting itself away in a hopeless struggle with base entanglements, which coiled closer and closer round him, till only death opened him an outlet. Conquerors are a class of men with whom, for most part, the world could well dispense; nor can the hard intellect, the unsympathizing loftiness and high but selfish enthusiasm of such persons inspire us in general with any affection; at best it may excite amazement; and their fall, like that of a pyramid, will be beheld with a certain sadness and awe. But a true Poet, a man in whose heart resides some effluence of Wisdom, some tone of the "Eternal Melodies," is the most precious gift that can be bestowed on a generation: we see in him a freer, purer development of whatever is noblest in ourselves; his life is a richer lesson to us; and we mourn his death as that of a benefactor who loved and taught us.

Such a gift had Nature, in her bounty, bestowed on us in Robert Burns; but with queenlike indifference she cast it from her hand, like a thing of no moment; and it was defaced and torn asunder, as an idle bauble, before we recognized it. To the ill-starred Burns was given the power of making man's life more venerable, but that of wisely guiding his own life was not given. Destiny,—for so in our ignorance we must speak,—his faults, the faults of others, proved too hard for him; and that spirit, which might have soared could it but have walked, soon sank to the dust, its glorious faculties trodden under foot in the blossom; and died, we may almost say, without ever having lived. And so kind and warm a soul; so full of inborn riches, of love to all living and lifeless things! How his heart flows out in sympathy over universal

Nature; and in her bleakest provinces discerns a beauty and a meaning! The "Daisy" falls not unheeded under his ploughshare; nor the ruined nest of that "wee, cowering, timorous beastie," cast forth, after all its provident pains, to "thole the sleety dribble and cranreuch cauld." The "hoar visage" of Winter delights him; he dwells with a sad and oft-returning fondness in these scenes of solemn desolation; but the voice of the tempest becomes an anthem to his ears; he loves to walk in the sounding woods, for "it raises his thoughts to *Him that walketh on the wings of the wind.*" A true Poet-soul, for it needs but to be struck, and the sound it yields will be music! But observe him chiefly as he mingles with his brother men. What warm, all-comprehending fellow-feeling; what trustful, boundless love; what generous exaggeration of the object loved! His rustic friend, his nut-brown maiden, are no longer mean and homely, but a hero and a queen, whom he prizes as the paragons of Earth. The rough scenes of Scottish life, not seen by him in any Arcadian illusion, but in the rude contradiction, in the smoke and soil of a too harsh reality, are still lovely to him: Poverty is indeed his companion, but Love also, and Courage; the simple feelings, the worth, the nobleness, that dwell under the straw roof, are dear and venerable to his heart: and thus over the lowest provinces of man's existence he pours the glory of his own soul; and they rise, in shadow and sunshine, softened and brightened into a beauty which other eyes discern not in the highest. He has a just self-consciousness, which too often degenerates into pride; yet it is a noble pride, for defence, not for offence; no cold suspicious feeling, but a frank and social one. The Peasant Poet bears himself, we might say, like a King in exile: he is cast among the low, and feels himself equal to the highest; yet he claims no rank, that none may be disputed to him. The forward he can repel, the supercilious he can subdue; pretensions of wealth or ancestry are of no avail with him; there is a fire in that dark eye, under which the "insolence of condescension" cannot thrive. In his abasement, in his extreme need, he forgets not for a moment the majesty of Poetry and Manhood. And yet, far as he feels himself above common men, he wanders not apart from them, but mixes warmly in their interests; nay, throws himself into their arms, and, as it were, entreats them to love him. It is moving to see how, in his darkest despondency, this proud being still seeks relief from friendship; unbosoms himself

often to the unworthy ; and, amid tears, strains to his glowing heart a heart that knows only the name of friendship. And yet he was " quick to learn ; " a man of keen vision, before whom common disguises afforded no concealment. His understanding saw through the hollowness even of accomplished deceivers ; but there was a generous credulity in his heart. And so did our Peasant show himself among us ; " a soul like an Æolian harp, in whose strings the vulgar wind, as it passed through them, changed itself into articulate melody." And this was he for whom the world found no fitter business than quarrelling with smugglers and vintners, computing excise-dues upon tallow, and gauging ale-barrels ! In such toils was that mighty Spirit sorrowfully wasted : and a hundred years may pass on, before another such is given us to waste.

All that remains of Burns, the Writings he has left, seem to us, as we hinted above, no more than a poor mutilated fraction of what was in him ; brief, broken glimpses of a genius that could never show itself complete ; that wanted all things for completeness ; culture, leisure, true effort, nay even length of life. His poems are, with scarcely any exception, mere occasional effusions ; poured forth with little premeditation ; expressing, by such means as offered, the passion, opinion, or humour of the hour. Never in one instance was it permitted him to grapple with any subject with the full collection of his strength, to fuse and mould it in the concentrated fire of his genius. To try by the strict rules of Art such imperfect fragments, would be at once unprofitable and unfair. Nevertheless, there is something in these poems, marred and defective as they are, which forbids the most fastidious student of poetry to pass them by. Some sort of enduring quality they must have : for after fifty years of the wildest vicissitudes in poetic taste, they still continue to be read ; nay, are read more and more eagerly, more and more extensively ; and this not only by literary virtuosos, and that class upon whom transitory causes operate most strongly, but by all classes, down to the most hard, unlettered and truly natural class, who read little, and especially no poetry, except because they find pleasure in it. The grounds of so singular and wide a popularity, which extends, in a literal sense, from the palace to the hut, and over all regions where the English tongue is spoken, are well worth inquiring into. After every just deduction, it

seems to imply some rare excellence in these works. What is that excellence ?

To answer this question will not lead us far. The excellence of Burns is, indeed, among the rarest, whether in poetry or prose ; but, at the same time, it is plain and easily recognized : his *Sincerity*, his indisputable air of Truth. Here are no fabulous woes or joys ; no hollow fantastic sentimentalities ; no wiredrawn refinings, either in thought or feeling : the passion that is traced before us has glowed in a living heart ; the opinion he utters has risen in his own understanding, and been a light to his own steps. He does not write from hearsay, but from sight and experience ; it is the scenes that he has lived and laboured amidst, that he describes : those scenes, rude and humble as they are, have kindled beautiful emotions in his soul, noble thoughts, and definite resolves ; and he speaks forth what is in him, not from any outward call of vanity or interest, but because his heart is too full to be silent. He speaks it with such melody and modulation as he can ; " in homely rustic jingle ; " but it is his own, and genuine. This is the grand secret for finding readers and retaining them : let him who would move and convince others, be first moved and convinced himself. Horace's rule, *Si vis me flere*, is applicable in a wider sense than the literal one. To every poet, to every writer, we might say : Be true, if you would be believed. Let a man but speak forth with genuine earnestness the thought, the emotion, the actual condition of his own heart ; and other men, so strangely are we all knit together by the tie of sympathy, must and will give heed to him. In culture, in extent of view, we may stand above the speaker, or below him ; but in either case, his words, if they are earnest and sincere, will find some response within us ; for in spite of all casual varieties in outward rank or inward, as face answers to face, so does the heart of man to man.

This may appear a very simple principle, and one which Burns had little merit in discovering. True, the discovery is easy enough : but the practical appliance is not easy ; is indeed the fundamental difficulty which all poets have to strive with, and which scarcely one in the hundred ever fairly surmounts. A head too dull to discriminate the true from the false ; a heart too dull to love the one at all risks, and to hate the other in spite of all temptations, are alike fatal to a writer. With either, or as more commonly happens, with both of these deficiencies combine a love of dis-

tinction, a wish to be original, which is seldom wanting, and we have Affectation, the bane of literature, as Cant, its elder brother, is of morals. How often does the one and the other front us, in poetry, as in life! Great poets themselves are not always free of this vice; nay, it is precisely on a certain sort and degree of greatness that it is most commonly ingrafted. A strong effort after excellence will sometimes solace itself with a mere shadow of success; he who has much to unfold, will sometimes unfold it imperfectly. Byron, for instance, was no common man: yet if we examine his poetry with this view, we shall find it far enough from faultless. Generally speaking, we should say that it is not true. He refreshes us, not with the divine fountain, but too often with vulgar strong waters, stimulating indeed to the taste, but soon ending in dislike, or even nausea. Are his Harolds and Giaours, we would ask, real men; we mean, poetically consistent and conceivable men? Do not these characters, does not the character of their author, which more or less shines through them all, rather appear a thing put on for the occasion; no natural or possible mode of being, but something intended to look much grander than nature? Surely, all these stormful agonies, this volcanic heroism, superhuman contempt and moody desperation, with so much scowling, and teeth-gnashing, and other sulphurous humour, is more like the brawling of a player in some paltry tragedy, which is to last three hours, than the bearing of a man in the business of life, which is to last threescore and ten years. To our minds there is a taint of this sort, something which we should call theatrical, false, affected, in every one of these otherwise so powerful pieces. Perhaps *Don Juan*, especially the latter parts of it, is the only thing approaching to a *sincere* work, he ever wrote; the only work where he showed himself, in any measure, as he was; and seemed so intent on his subject as, for moments, to forget himself. Yet Byron hated this vice; we believe, heartily detested it: nay he had declared formal war against it in words. So difficult is it even for the strongest to make this primary attainment, which might seem the simplest of all: to *read its own consciousness without mistakes*, without errors involuntary or wilful! We recollect no poet of Burns's susceptibility who comes before us from the first, and abides with us to the last, with such a total want of affectation. He is an honest man, and an honest writer. In his successes and his failures, in his greatness and his

littleness, he is ever clear, simple, true, and glitters with no lustre but his own. We reckon this to be a great virtue; to be, in fact, the root of most other virtues, literary as well as moral.

Here, however, let us say, it is to the Poetry of Burns that we now allude; to those writings which he had time to meditate, and where no special reason existed to warp his critical feeling, or obstruct his endeavour to fulfil it. Certain of his Letters, and other fractions of prose composition, by no means deserve this praise. Here, doubtless, there is not the same natural truth of style; but on the contrary, something not only stiff, but strained and twisted; a certain high-flown inflated tone; the stilting emphasis of which contrasts ill with the firmness and rugged simplicity of even his poorest verses. Thus no man, it would appear, is altogether unaffected. Does not Shakspeare himself sometimes premeditate the sheerest bombast! But even with regard to these Letters of Burns, it is but fair to state that he had two excuses. The first was his comparative deficiency in language. Burns, though for most part he writes with singular force and even gracefulness, is not master of English prose, as he is of Scottish verse; not master of it, we mean, in proportion to the depth and vehemence of his matter. These Letters strike us as the effort of a man to express something which he has no organ fit for expressing. But a second and weightier excuse is to be found in the peculiarity of Burns's social rank. His correspondents are often men whose relation to him he has never accurately ascertained; whom therefore he is either forearming himself against, or else unconsciously flattering, by adopting the style he thinks will please them. At all events, we should remember that these faults, even in his Letters, are not the rule, but the exception. Whenever he writes, as one would ever wish to do, to trusted friends and on real interests, his style becomes simple, vigorous, expressive, sometimes even beautiful. His letters to Mrs. Dunlop are uniformly excellent.

But we return to his Poetry. In addition to its Sincerity, it has another peculiar merit, which indeed is but a mode, or perhaps a means, of the foregoing: this displays itself in his choice of subjects; or rather in his indifference as to subjects, and the power he has of making all subjects interesting. The ordinary poet, like the ordinary man, is forever seeking in external circumstances the help which can be found only in himself. In what is familiar and near at hand,

he discerns no form or comeliness : home is not poetical but prosaic ; it is in some past, distant, conventional heroic world, that poetry resides ; were he there and not here, were he thus and not so, it would be well with him. Hence our innumerable host of rose-coloured Novels and iron-mailed Epics, with their locality not on the Earth, but somewhere nearer to the Moon. Hence our Virgins of the Sun, and our Knights of the Cross, malicious Saracens in turbans, and copper-coloured Chiefs in wampum, and so many other truculent figures from the heroic times or the heroic climates, who on all hands swarm in our poetry. Peace be with them ! But yet, as a great moralist proposed preaching to the men of this century, so would we fain preach to the poets, " a sermon on the duty of staying at home." Let them be sure that heroic ages and heroic climates can do little for them. That form of life has attraction for us, less because it is better or nobler than our own, than simply because it is different ; and even this attraction must be of the most transient sort. For will not our own age, one day, be an ancient one ; and have as quaint a costume as the rest ; not contrasted with the rest, therefore, but ranked along with them, in respect of quaintness ? Does Homer interest us now, because he wrote of what passed beyond his native Greece, and two centuries before he was born ; or because he wrote what passed in God's world, and in the heart of man, which is the same after thirty centuries ? Let our poets look to this ; is their feeling really finer, truer, and their vision deeper than that of other men,—they have nothing to fear, even from the humblest subject ; is it not so,—they have nothing to hope, but an ephemeral favour, even from the highest.

The poet, we imagine, can never have far to seek for a subject : the elements of his art are in him, and around him on every hand ; for him the Ideal world is not remote from the Actual, but under it and within it : nay, he is a poet, precisely because he can discern it there. Wherever there is a sky above him, and a world around him, the poet is in his place ; for here too is man's existence, with its infinite longings and small acquirings ; its ever-thwarted, ever-renewed endeavours ; its unspeakable aspirations, its fears and hopes that wander through Eternity ; and all the mystery of brightness and of gloom that it was ever made of, in any age or climate, since man first began to live. Is there not the fifth act of a Tragedy in every death-bed, though it

were a peasant's, and a bed of heath? And are wooings and weddings obsolete, that there can be Comedy no longer? Or are men suddenly grown wise, that Laughter must no longer shake his sides, but be cheated of his Farce? Man's life and nature is, as it was, and as it will ever be. But the poet must have an eye to read these things, and a heart to understand them; or they come and pass away before him in vain. He is a *vates*, a seer; a gift of vision has been given him. Has life no meanings for him, which another cannot equally decipher; then he is no poet, and Delphi itself will not make him one.

In this respect, Burns, though not perhaps absolutely a great poet, better manifests his capability, better proves the truth of his genius, than if he had by his own strength kept the whole Minerva Press going, to the end of his literary course. He shows himself at least a poet of Nature's own making; and Nature, after all, is still the grand agent in making poets. We often hear of this and the other external condition being requisite for the existence of a poet. Sometimes it is a certain sort of training; he must have studied certain things, studied, for instance, "the elder dramatists," and so learned a poetic language; as if poetry lay in the tongue, not in the heart. At other times we are told he must be bred in a certain rank, and must be on a confidential footing with the higher classes; because, above all things, he must see the world. As to seeing the world, we apprehend this will cause him little difficulty, if he have but eyesight to see it with. Without eyesight, indeed, the task might be hard. The blind or the purblind man "travels from Dan to Beersheba, and finds it all barren." But happily every poet is born *in* the world; and sees it, with or against his will, every day and every hour he lives. The mysterious workmanship of man's heart, the true light and the inscrutable darkness of man's destiny, reveal themselves not only in capital cities and crowded saloons, but in every hut and hamlet where men have their abode. Nay, do not the elements of all human virtues and all human vices; the passions at once of a Borgia and of a Luther, lie written, in stronger or fainter lines, in the consciousness of every individual bosom, that has practised honest self-examination? Truly, this same world may be seen in Mossgiel and Tarbolton, if we look well, as clearly as it ever came to light in Crockford's, or the Tuileries itself.

But sometimes still harder requisitions are laid on the poor

aspirant to poetry ; for it is hinted that he should have *been born* two centuries ago ; inasmuch as poetry, about that date, vanished from the earth, and became no longer attainable by men ! Such cobweb speculations have, now and then, overhung the field of literature ; but they obstruct not the growth of any plant there : the Shakspeare or the Burns, unconsciously and merely as he walks onward, silently brushes them away. Is not every genius an impossibility till he appear ? Why do we call him new and original, if *we* saw where his marble was lying, and what fabric he could rear from it ? It is not the material but the workman that is wanting. It is not the dark *place* that hinders, but the dim *eye*. A Scottish peasant's life was the meanest and rudest of all lives, till Burns became a poet in it, and a poet of it ; found it a *man's* life, and therefore significant to men. A thousand battle-fields remain unsung ; but the *Wounded Hare* has not perished without its memorial ; a balm of mercy yet breathes on us from its dumb agonies, because a poet was there. Our *Halloween* had passed and repassed, in rude awe and laughter, since the era of the Druids ; but no Theocritus, till Burns, discerned in it the materials of a Scottish Idyl : neither was the *Holy Fair* any *Council of Trent* or Roman *Jubilee* ; but nevertheless, *Superstition* and *Hypocrisy* and *Fun* having been propitious to him, in this man's hand it became a poem, instinct with satire and genuine comic life. Let but the true poet be given us, we repeat it, place him where and how you will, and true poetry will not be wanting.

Independently of the essential gift of poetic feeling, as we have now attempted to describe it, a certain rugged sterling worth pervades whatever Burns has written ; a virtue, as of green fields and mountain breezes, dwells in his poetry ; it is redolent of natural life and hardy natural men. There is a decisive strength in him, and yet a sweet native gracefulness : he is tender, he is vehement, yet without constraint or too visible effort ; he melts the heart, or inflames it, with a power which seems habitual and familiar to him. We see that in this man there was the gentleness, the trembling pity of a woman, with the deep earnestness, the force and passionate ardour of a hero. Tears lie in him, and consuming fire ; as lightning lurks in the drops of the summer cloud. He has a resonance in his bosom for every note of human feeling ; the high and the low, the sad, the ludicrous, the joyful, are welcome in their turns to his " lightly-moved and

all-conceiving spirit." And observe with what a fierce prompt force he grasps his subject, be it what it may! How he fixes, as it were, the full image of the matter in his eye; full and clear in every lineament; and catches the real type and essence of it, amid a thousand accidents and superficial circumstances, no one of which misleads him! Is it of reason; some truth to be discovered? No sophistry, no vain surface-logic detains him; quick, resolute, unerring, he pierces through into the marrow of the question; and speaks his verdict with an emphasis that cannot be forgotten. Is it of description; some visual object to be represented? No poet of any age or nation is more graphic than Burns: the characteristic features disclose themselves to him at a glance; three lines from his hand, and we have a likeness. And, in that rough dialect, in that rude, often awkward metre, so clear and definite a likeness! It seems a draughtsman working with a burnt stick; and yet the burin of a Retzsch is not more expressive or exact.

Of this last excellence, the plainest and most comprehensive of all, being indeed the root and foundation of *every* sort of talent, poetical or intellectual, we could produce innumerable instances from the writings of Burns. Take these glimpses of a snow-storm from his *Winter Night* (the italics are ours):

When biting Boreas, fell and doure,
Sharp shivers thro' the leafless bow'r,
And Phœbus *gies a short-liv'd glowr*
Far south the lift,
Dim-dark'ning thro' the flaky show'r
Or whirling drift:

'Ae night the storm the steeples rock'd,
Poor labour sweet in sleep was lock'd,
While burns *wi' snawy wreeths upchok'd*
Wild-eddying swhirl,
Or thro' the mining outlet bock'd
Down headlong hurl.

Are there not "descriptive touches" here? The describer *saw* this thing; the essential feature and true likeness of every circumstance in it; saw, and not with the eye only. "Poor labour locked in sweet sleep;" the dead stillness of man, unconscious, vanquished, yet not unprotected, while such strife of the material elements rages, and seems to reign supreme in loneliness: this is of the heart as well as of the

eye !—Look also at his image of a thaw, and prophesied fall of the *Auld Brig* :

> When heavy, dark, continued, a'-day rains
> Wi' deepening deluges o'erflow the plains ;
> When from the hills where springs the brawling Coil,
> Or stately Lugar's *mossy* fountains *boil*,
> Or where the Greenock winds his *moorland* course,
> Or haunted Garpal * draws his feeble source,
> Arous'd by blust'ring winds and *spotting* thowes,
> *In mony a torrent down his snaw-broo rowes ;*
> *While crashing ice, borne on the roaring speat,*
> *Sweeps dams and mills and brigs a' to the gate ;*
> And from Glenbuck down to the Rottonkey,
> Auld Ayr is just one lengthen'd *tumbling* sea ;
> Then down ye'll hurl, Deil nor ye never rise !
> And *dash the gumlie jaups up to the pouring skies.*

The last line is in itself a Poussin-picture of that Deluge ! The welkin has, as it were, bent down with its weight ; the " gumlie jaups " and the " pouring skies " are mingled together ; it is a world of rain and ruin.—In respect of mere clearness and minute fidelity, the *Farmer's* commendation of his *Auld Mare*, in plough or in cart, may vie with Homer's Smithy of the Cyclops, or yoking of Priam's Chariot. Nor have we forgotten stout *Burn-the-wind* and his brawny customers, inspired by *Scotch Drink* : but it is needless to multiply examples. One other trait of a much finer sort we select from multitudes of such among his *Songs*. It gives, in a single line, to the saddest feeling the saddest environment and local habitation :

> *The pale Moon is setting beyond the white wave,*
> *And Time is setting wi' me, O ;*
> Farewell, false friends ! false lover, farewell !
> I'll nae mair trouble them nor thee, O.

This clearness of sight we have called the foundation of all talent ; for in fact, unless we *see* our object, how shall we know how to place or prize it, in our understanding, our imagination, our affections ? Yet it is not in itself, perhaps, a very high excellence ; but capable of being united indifferently with the strongest, or with ordinary power. Homer surpasses all men in this quality : but strangely enough, at no great distance below him are Richardson and Defoe. It belongs, in truth, to what is called a lively mind ; and gives

* *Fabulosus* Hydaspes !

no sure indication of the higher endowments that may exist along with it. In all the three cases we have mentioned, it is combined with great garrulity; their descriptions are detailed, ample and lovingly exact; Homer's fire bursts through, from time to time, as if by accident; but Defoe and Richardson have no fire. Burns, again, is not more distinguished by the clearness than by the impetuous force of his conceptions. Of the strength, the piercing emphasis with which he thought, his emphasis of expression may give a humble but the readiest proof. Who ever uttered sharper sayings than his; words more memorable, now by their burning vehemence, now by their cool vigour and laconic pith? A single phrase depicts a whole subject, a whole scene. We hear of "a gentleman that derived his patent of nobility direct from Almighty God." Our Scottish forefathers in the battle-field struggled forward "*red-wat-shod*:" in this one word, a full vision of horror and carnage, perhaps too frightfully accurate for Art!

In fact, one of the leading features in the mind of Burns is this vigour of his strictly intellectual perceptions. A resolute force is ever visible in his judgments, and in his feelings and volitions. Professor Stewart says of him, with some surprise: "All the faculties of Burns's mind were, as far as I could judge, equally vigorous; and his predilection for poetry was rather the result of his own enthusiastic and impassioned temper, than of a genius exclusively adapted to that species of composition. From his conversation I should have pronounced him to be fitted to excel in whatever walk of ambition he had chosen to exert his abilities." But this, if we mistake not, is at all times the very essence of a truly poetical endowment. Poetry, except in such cases as that of Keats, where the whole consists in a weak-eyed maudlin sensibility, and a certain vague random tunefulness of nature, is no separate faculty, no organ which can be superadded to the rest, or disjoined from them; but rather the result of their general harmony and completion. The feelings, the gifts that exist in the Poet are those that exist, with more or less development, in every human soul: the imagination, which shudders at the Hell of Dante, is the same faculty, weaker in degree, which called that picture into being. How does the Poet speak to men, with power, but by being still more a man than they? Shakspeare, it has been well observed, in the planning and completing of his tragedies, has shown an Understanding, were it nothing

more, which might have governed states, or indited a *Novum Organum*. What Burns's force of understanding may have been, we have less means of judging : it had to dwell among the humblest objects ; never saw Philosophy ; never rose, except by natural effort and for short intervals, into the region of great ideas. Nevertheless, sufficient indication, if no proof sufficient, remains for us in his works : we discern the brawny movements of a gigantic though untutored strength ; and can understand how, in conversation, his quick sure insight into men and things may, as much as aught else about him, have amazed the best thinkers of his time and country.

But, unless we mistake, the intellectual gift of Burns is fine as well as strong. The more delicate relations of things could not well have escaped his eye, for they were intimately present to his heart. The logic of the senate and the forum is indispensable, but not all-sufficient ; nay, perhaps the highest Truth is that which will the most certainly elude it. For this logic works by words, and " the highest," it has been said, " cannot be expressed in words." We are not without tokens of an openness of this higher truth also, of a keen though uncultivated sense for it, having existed in Burns. Mr. Stewart, it will be remembered, " wonders," in the passage above quoted, that Burns had formed some distinct conception of the " doctrine of association." We rather think that far subtler things than the doctrine of association had from of old been familiar to him. Here for instance :

" We know nothing," thus writes he, " or next to nothing, of the structure of our souls, so we cannot account for those seeming caprices in them, that one should be particularly pleased with this thing, or struck with that, which, on minds of a different cast, makes no extraordinary impression. I have some favourite flowers in spring, among which are the mountain-daisy, the hare-bell, the foxglove, the wild-brier rose, the budding birch, and the hoary hawthorn, that I view and hang over with particular delight. I never hear the loud solitary whistle of the curlew in a summer noon, or the wild mixing cadence of a troop of gray plover in an autumnal morning, without feeling an elevation of soul like the enthusiasm of devotion or poetry. Tell me, my dear friend, to what can this be owing ? Are we a piece of machinery, which, like the Æolian harp, passive, takes the impression of the passing accident ; or do these workings

argue something within us above the trodden clod ? I own myself partial to such proofs of those awful and important realities : a God that made all things, man's immaterial and immortal nature, and a world of weal or wo beyond death and the grave."

Force and fineness of understanding are often spoken of as something different from general force and fineness of nature, as something partly independent of them. The necessities of language so require it ; but in truth these qualities are not distinct and independent ; except in special cases, and from special causes, they ever go together. A man of strong understanding is generally a man of strong character ; neither is delicacy in the one kind often divided from delicacy in the other. No one, at all events, is ignorant that in the Poetry of Burns keenness of insight keeps pace with keenness of feeling ; that his *light* is not more pervading than his *warmth*. He is a man of the most impassioned temper ; with passions, not strong only, but noble, and of the sort in which great virtues and great poems take their rise. It is reverence, it is love towards all Nature that inspires him, that opens his eyes to its beauty, and makes heart and voice eloquent in its praise. There is a true old saying, that " Love furthers knowledge : " but above all, it is the living essence of that knowledge which makes poets ; the first principle of its existence, increase, activity. Of Burns's fervid affection, his generous all-embracing Love, we have spoken already, as of the grand distinction of his nature, seen equally in word and deed, in his Life and in his Writings. It were easy to multiply examples. Not man only, but all that environs man in the material and moral universe, is lovely in his sight : " the hoary hawthorn," the " troop of gray plover," the " solitary curlew," all are dear to him ; all live in this Earth along with him, and to all he is knit as in mysterious brotherhood. How touching is it, for instance, that, amidst the gloom of personal misery, brooding over the wintry desolation without him and within him, he thinks of the " ourie cattle " and " silly sheep," and their sufferings in the pitiless storm !

I thought me on the ourie cattle,
Or silly sheep, wha bide this brattle
O' wintry war,
Or thro' the drift, deep-lairing, sprattle,
Beneath a scaur.

Ilk happing bird, wee helpless thing,
That in the merry months o' spring
Delighted me to hear thee sing,
What comes o' thee ?
Where wilt thou cow'r thy chittering wing,
And close thy ee ?

The tenant of the mean hut, with its " ragged roof and chinky wall," has a heart to pity even these ! This is worth several homilies on Mercy ; for it is the voice of Mercy herself. Burns, indeed, lives in sympathy ; his soul rushes forth into all realms of being ; nothing that has existence can be indifferent to him. The very Devil he cannot hate with right orthodoxy :

But fare you weel, auld Nickie-ben ;
O, wad ye tak a thought and men' !
Ye aiblins might,—I dinna ken,—
Still hae a stake ;
I'm wae to think upo' yon den,
Even for your sake !

" *He* is the father of curses and lies," said Dr. Slop ; " and is cursed and damned already."—" I am sorry for it," quoth my uncle Toby !—a Poet without Love were a physical and metaphysical impossibility.

But has it not been said, in contradiction to this principle, that " Indignation makes verses " ? It has been so said, and is true enough : but the contradiction is apparent, not real. The Indignation which makes verses is, properly speaking, an inverted Love ; the love of some right, some worth, some goodness, belonging to ourselves or others, which has been injured, and which this tempestuous feeling issues forth to defend and avenge. No selfish fury of heart, existing there as a primary feeling, and without its opposite, ever produced much Poetry : otherwise, we suppose, the Tiger were the most musical of all our choristers. Johnson said, he loved a good hater ; by which he must have meant, not so much one that hated violently, as one that hated wisely ; hated baseness from love of nobleness. However, in spite of Johnson's paradox, tolerable enough for once in speech, but which need not have been so often adopted in print since then, we rather believe that good men deal sparingly in hatred, either wise or unwise : nay, that a " good " hater is still a desideratum in this world. The Devil, at least, who passes for the chief and best of that class, is said to be nowise an amiable character.

Of the verses which Indignation makes, Burns has also given us specimens: and among the best that were ever given. Who will forget his "*Dweller in yon Dungeon dark;*" a piece that might have been chanted by the Furies of Æschylus? The secrets of the infernal Pit are laid bare; a boundless baleful "darkness visible;" and streaks of hell-fire quivering madly in its black haggard bosom!

> Dweller in yon Dungeon dark,
> Hangman of Creation, mark!
> Who in widow's weeds appears,
> Laden with unhonoured years,
> Noosing with care a bursting purse,
> Baited with many a deadly curse!

Why should we speak of *Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled*; since all know of it, from the king to the meanest of his subjects? This dithyrambic was composed on horseback; in riding in the middle of tempests, over the wildest Galloway moor, in company with a Mr. Syme, who, observing the poet's looks, forbore to speak,—judiciously enough, for a man composing *Bruce's Address* might be unsafe to trifle with. Doubtless this stern hymn was singing itself, as he formed it, through the soul of Burns; but to the external ear, it should be sung with the throat of the whirlwind. So long as there is warm blood in the heart of Scotchman or man, it will move in fierce thrills under this war-ode; the best, we believe, that was ever written by any pen.

Another wild stormful Song, that dwells in our ear and mind with a strange tenacity, is *Macpherson's Farewell*. Perhaps there is something in the tradition itself that coöperates. For was not this grim Celt, this shaggy Northland Cacus, that "lived a life of sturt and strife, and died by treacherie,"—was not he too one of the Nimrods and Napoleons of the earth, in the arena of his own remote misty glens, for want of a clearer and wider one? Nay, was there not a touch of grace given him? A fibre of love and softness, of poetry itself, must have lived in his savage heart: for he composed that air the night before his execution; on the wings of that poor melody his better soul would soar away above oblivion, pain and all the ignominy and despair, which, like an avalanche, was hurling him to the abyss! Here also, as at Thebes, and in Pelops' line, was material Fate matched against man's Free-will; matched in bitterest though obscure duel; and

the ethereal soul sank not, even in its blindness, without a cry which has survived it. But who, except Burns, could have given words to such a soul; words that we never listen to without a strange half-barbarous, half-poetic fellow-feeling?

Sae rantingly, sae wantonly,
Sae dauntingly gaed he;
He play'd a spring, and danced it round,
Below the gallows-tree.

Under a lighter disguise, the same principle of Love, which we have recognized as the great characteristic of Burns, and of all true poets, occasionally manifests itself in the shape of Humour. Everywhere, indeed, in his sunny moods, a full buoyant flood of mirth rolls through the mind of Burns; he rises to the high, and stoops to the low, and is brother and playmate to all Nature. We speak not of his bold and often irresistible faculty of caricature; for this is Drollery rather than Humour; but a much tenderer sportfulness dwells in him; and comes forth here and there, in evanescent and beautiful touches; as in his *Address to the Mouse*, or the *Farmer's Mare*, or in his *Elegy on poor Mailie*, which last may be reckoned his happiest effort of this kind. In these pieces there are traits of a Humour as fine as that of Sterne; yet altogether different, original, peculiar,—the Humour of Burns.

Of the tenderness, the playful pathos, and many other kindred qualities of Burns's Poetry, much more might be said; but now, with these poor outlines of a sketch, we must prepare to quit this part of our subject. To speak of his individual Writings, adequately and with any detail, would lead us far beyond our limits. As already hinted, we can look on but few of these pieces as, in strict critical language, deserving the name of Poems; they are rhymed eloquence, rhymed pathos, rhymed sense; yet seldom essentially melodious, aerial, poetical. *Tam o' Shanter* itself, which enjoys so high a favour, does not appear to us at all decisively to come under this last category. It is not so much a poem, as a piece of sparkling rhetoric; the heart and body of the story still lies hard and dead. He has not gone back, much less carried us back, into that dark, earnest, wondering age, when the tradition was believed, and when it took its rise; he does not attempt, by any new-modelling of his supernatural ware, to strike

anew that deep mysterious chord of human nature, which once responded to such things; and which lives in us too, and will forever live, though silent now, or vibrating with far other notes, and to far different issues. Our German readers will understand us, when we say, that he is not the Tieck but the Musäus of this tale. Externally it is all green and living; yet look closer, it is no firm growth, but only ivy on a rock. The piece does not properly cohere: the strange chasm which yawns in our incredulous imaginations between the Ayr public-house and the gate of Tophet, is nowhere bridged over, nay the idea of such a bridge is laughed at; and thus the Tragedy of the adventure becomes a mere drunken phantasmagoria, or many-coloured spectrum painted on ale-vapours, and the Farce alone has any reality. We do not say that Burns should have made much more of this tradition; we rather think that, for strictly poetical purposes, not much *was* to be made of it. Neither are we blind to the deep, varied, genial power displayed in what he has actually accomplished; but we find far more "Shakspearean" qualities, as these of *Tam o' Shanter* have been fondly named, in many of his other pieces; nay, we incline to believe that this latter might have been written, all but quite as well, by a man who, in place of genius, had only possessed talent.

Perhaps we may venture to say, that the most strictly poetical of all his "poems" is one which does not appear in Currie's Edition; but has been often printed before and since, under the humble title of *The Jolly Beggars*. The subject truly is among the lowest in Nature; but it only the more shows our Poet's gift in raising it into the domain of Art. To our minds, this piece seems thoroughly compacted; melted together, refined; and poured forth in one flood of true *liquid* harmony. It is light, airy, soft of movement; yet sharp and precise in its details; every face is a portrait: that *raucle carlin*, that *wee Apollo*, that *Son of Mars*, are Scottish, yet ideal; the scene is at once a dream, and the very Ragcastle of "Poosie-Nansie." Farther, it seems in a considerable degree complete, a real self-supporting Whole, which is the highest merit in a poem. The blanket of the Night is drawn asunder for a moment; in full, ruddy, flaming light, these rough tatterdemalions are seen in their boisterous revel; for the strong pulse of Life vindicates its right to gladness even here:

and when the curtain closes, we prolong the action, without effort; the next day as the last, our *Caird* and our *Ballad-monger* are singing and soldiering; their "brats and callets" are hawking, begging, cheating; and some other night, in new combinations, they will wring from Fate another hour of wassail and good cheer. Apart from the universal sympathy with man which this again bespeaks in Burns, a genuine inspiration and no inconsiderable technical talent are manifested here. There is the fidelity, humour, warm life and accurate painting and grouping of some Teniers, for whom hostlers and carousing peasants are not without significance. It would be strange, doubtless, to call this the best of Burns's writings: we mean to say only, that it seems to us the most perfect of its kind, as a piece of poetical composition, strictly so called. In the *Beggars' Opera*, in the *Beggars' Bush*, as other critics have already remarked, there is nothing which, in real poetic vigour, equals this *Cantata*; nothing, as we think, which comes within many degrees of it.

But by far the most finished, complete and truly inspired pieces of Burns are, without dispute, to be found among his *Songs*. It is here that, although through a small aperture, his light shines with least obstruction; in its highest beauty and pure sunny clearness. The reason may be, that Song is a brief simple species of composition; and requires nothing so much for its perfection as genuine poetic feeling, genuine music of heart. Yet the Song has its rules equally with the Tragedy; rules which in most cases are poorly fulfilled, in many cases are not so much as felt. We might write a long essay on the Songs of Burns; which we reckon by far the best that Britain has yet produced: for indeed, since the era of Queen Elizabeth, we know not that, by any other hand, aught truly worth attention has been accomplished in this department. True, we have songs enough "by persons of quality;" we have tawdry, hollow, wine-bred madrigals; many a rhymed speech "in the flowing and watery vein of Ossorius the Portugal Bishop," rich in sonorous words, and, for moral, dashed perhaps with some tint of a sentimental sensuality; all of which many persons cease not from endeavouring to sing; though for most part, we fear, the music is but from the throat outwards, or at best from some region far enough short of the *Soul*; not in which, but in

a certain inane Limbo of the Fancy, or even in some vaporous debateable-land on the outskirts of the Nervous System, most of such madrigals and rhymed speeches seem to have originated.

With the Songs of Burns we must not name these things. Independently of the clear, manly, heartfelt sentiment that ever pervades *his* poetry, his Songs are honest in another point of view: in form, as well as in spirit. They do not *affect* to be set to music, but they actually and in themselves are music; they have received their life, and fashioned themselves together, in the medium of Harmony, as Venus rose from the bosom of the sea. The story, the feeling, is not detailed, but suggested; not *said*, or spouted, in rhetorical completeness and coherence; but *sung*, in fitful gushes, in glowing hints, in fantastic breaks, in *warblings* not of the voice only, but of the whole mind. We consider this to be the essence of a song; and that no songs since the little careless catches, and as it were drops of song, which Shakspeare has here and there sprinkled over his Plays, fulfil this condition in nearly the same degree as most of Burns's do. Such grace and truth of external movement, too, presupposes in general a corresponding force and truth of sentiment and inward meaning. The Songs of Burns are not more perfect in the former quality than in the latter. With what tenderness he sings, yet with what vehemence and entireness! There is a piercing wail in his sorrow, the purest rapture in his joy; he burns with the sternest ire, or laughs with the loudest or sliest mirth; and yet he is sweet and soft, "sweet as the smile when fond lovers meet, and soft as their parting tear." If we farther take into account the immense variety of his subjects; how, from the loud flowing revel in *Willie brew'd a Peck o' Maut*, to the still, rapt enthusiasm of sadness for *Mary in Heaven*; from the glad kind greeting of *Auld Lang Syne*, or the comic archness of *Duncan Gray*, to the fire-eyed fury of *Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled*, he has found a tone and words for every mood of man's heart, —it will seem a small praise if we rank him as the first of all our Song-writers; for we know not where to find one worthy of being second to him.

It is on his Songs, as we believe, that Burns's chief influence as an author will ultimately be found to depend: nor, if our Fletcher's aphorism is true, shall we account this a small influence. "Let me make the songs of a

people," said he, " and you shall make its laws." Surely, if ever any Poet might have equalled himself with Legislators on this ground, it was Burns. His Songs are already part of the mother-tongue, not of Scotland only but of Britain, and of the millions that in all ends of the earth speak a British language. In hut and hall, as the heart unfolds itself in many-coloured joy and woe of existence, the *name*, the *voice* of that joy and that woe, is the name and voice which Burns has given them. Strictly speaking, perhaps no British man has so deeply affected the thoughts and feelings of so many men, as this solitary and altogether private individual, with means apparently the humblest.

In another point of view, moreover, we incline to think that Burns's influence may have been considerable: we mean, as exerted specially on the Literature of his country, at least on the Literature of Scotland. Among the great changes which British, particularly Scottish literature, has undergone since that period, one of the greatest will be found to consist in its remarkable increase of nationality. Even the English writers, most popular in Burns's time, were little distinguished for their literary patriotism, in this its best sense. A certain attenuated cosmopolitanism had, in good measure, taken place of the old insular home-feeling; literature was, as it were, without any local environment; was not nourished by the affections which spring from a native soil. Our Grays and Glovers seemed to write almost as if *in vacuo*; the thing written bears no mark of place; it is not written so much for Englishmen, as for men; or rather, which is the inevitable result of this, for certain Generalizations which philosophy termed men. Goldsmith is an exception; not so Johnson; the scene of his *Rambler* is little more English than that of his *Rasselas*.

But if such was, in some degree, the case with England, it was, in the highest degree, the case with Scotland. In fact, our Scottish literature had, at that period, a very singular aspect; unexampled, so far as we know, except perhaps at Geneva, where the same state of matters appears still to continue. For a long period after Scotland became British, we had no literature: at the date when Addison and Steele were writing their *Spectators*, our good John Boston was writing, with the noblest intent, but alike in defiance of grammar and philosophy, his *Fourfold State of*

Man. Then came the schisms in our national Church, and the fiercer schisms in our Body Politic: Theologic ink, and Jacobite blood, with gall enough in both cases, seemed to have blotted out the intellect of the country: however, it was only obscured, not obliterated. Lord Kames made nearly the first attempt at writing English; and ere long, Hume, Robertson, Smith, and a whole host of followers, attracted hither the eyes of all Europe. And yet in this brilliant resuscitation of our "fervid genius," there was nothing truly Scottish, nothing indigenous; except, perhaps, the natural impetuosity of intellect, which we sometimes claim, and are sometimes upbraided with, as a characteristic of our nation. It is curious to remark that Scotland, so full of writers, had no Scottish culture, nor indeed any English; our culture was almost exclusively French. It was by studying Racine and Voltaire, Batteux and Boileau, that Kames had trained himself to be a critic and philosopher; it was the light of Montesquieu and Mably that guided Robertson in his political speculations; Quesnay's lamp that kindled the lamp of Adam Smith. Hume was too rich a man to borrow; and perhaps he reacted on the French more than he was acted on by them: but neither had he aught to do with Scotland; Edinburgh, equally with La Flèche, was but the lodging and laboratory, in which he not so much morally *lived*, as metaphysically *investigated*. Never, perhaps, was there a class of writers so clear and well-ordered, yet so totally destitute, to all appearance, of any patriotic affection, nay of any human affection whatever. The French wits of the period were as unpatriotic: but their general deficiency in moral principle, not to say their avowed sensuality and unbelief in all virtue, strictly so called, render this accountable enough. We hope there is a patriotism founded on something better than prejudice; that our country may be dear to us, without injury to our philosophy; that in loving and justly prizing all other lands, we may prize justly, and yet love before all others, our own stern Motherland, and the venerable Structure of social and moral Life, which Mind has through long ages been building up for us there. Surely there is nourishment for the better part of man's heart in all this: surely the roots that have fixed themselves in the very core of man's being, may be so cultivated as to grow up not into briers, but into roses, in the field of his life! Our Scottish sages have no

such propensities; the field of their life shows neither briers nor roses; but only a flat, continuous thrashing-floor for Logic, whereon all questions, from the "Doctrine of Rent" to the "Natural History of Religion," are thrashed and sifted with the same mechanical impartiality!

With Sir Walter Scott at the head of our literature, it cannot be denied that much of this evil is past, or rapidly passing away: our chief literary men, whatever other faults they may have, no longer live among us like a French Colony, or some knot of Propaganda Missionaries; but like natural-born subjects of the soil, partaking and sympathizing in all our attachments, humours and habits. Our literature no longer grows in water but in mould, and with the true racy virtues of the soil and climate. How much of this change may be due to Burns, or to any other individual, it might be difficult to estimate. Direct literary imitation of Burns was not to be looked for. But his example, in the fearless adoption of domestic subjects, could not but operate from afar; and certainly in no heart did the love of country ever burn with a warmer glow than in that of Burns: "a tide of Scottish prejudice," as he modestly calls this deep and generous feeling, "had been poured along his veins, and he felt that it would boil there till the flood-gates shut in eternal rest." It seemed to him as if *he* could do so little for his country, and yet would so gladly have done all. One small province stood open for him,—that of Scottish Song; and how eagerly he entered on it, how devotedly he laboured there! In his toilsome journeyings, this object never quits him; it is the little happy-valley of his careworn heart. In the gloom of his own affliction, he eagerly searches after some lonely brother of the muse, and rejoices to snatch one other name from the oblivion that was covering it! These were early feelings, and they abode with him to the end:

> . . . A wish (I mind its power),
> A wish, that to my latest hour
> Will strongly heave my breast,—
> That I, for poor auld Scotland's sake,
> Some useful plan or book could make,
> Or sing a sang at least.
>
> The rough bur Thistle spreading wide
> Amang the bearded bear,
> I turn'd my weeding-clips aside,
> And spared the symbol dear.

But to leave the mere literary character of Burns, which has already detained us too long. Far more interesting than any of his written works, as it appears to us, are his acted ones: the Life he willed and was fated to lead among his fellow-men. These Poems are but like little rhymed fragments scattered here and there in the grand unrhymed Romance of his earthly existence; and it is only when intercalated in this at their proper places, that they attain their full measure of significance. And this, too, alas, was but a fragment! The plan of a mighty edifice had been sketched; some columns, porticoes, firm masses of building, stand completed; the rest more or less clearly indicated; with many a far-stretching tendency, which only studious and friendly eyes can now trace towards the purposed termination. For the work is broken off in the middle, almost in the beginning; and rises among us, beautiful and sad, at once unfinished and a ruin! If charitable judgment was necessary in estimating his Poems, and justice required that the aim and the manifest power to fulfil it must often be accepted for the fulfilment; much more is this the case in regard to his Life, the sum and result of all his endeavours, where his difficulties came upon him not in detail only, but in mass; and so much has been left unaccomplished, nay was mistaken, and altogether marred.

Properly speaking, there is but one era in the life of Burns, and that the earliest. We have not youth and manhood, but only youth; for, to the end, we discern no decisive change in the complexion of his character; in his thirty-seventh year, he is still, as it were, in youth. With all that resoluteness of judgment, that penetrating insight, and singular maturity of intellectual power, exhibited in his writings, he never attains to any clearness regarding himself; to the last, he never ascertains his peculiar aim, even with such distinctness as is common among ordinary men; and therefore never can pursue it with that singleness of will, which insures success and some contentment to such men. To the last, he wavers between two purposes: glorying in his talent, like a true poet, yet he cannot consent to make this his chief and sole glory, and to follow it as the one thing needful, through poverty or riches, through good or evil report. Another far meaner ambition still cleaves to him; he must dream and struggle about a certain "Rock of Independence;" which, natural and

even admirable as it might be, was still but a warring with the world, on the comparatively insignificant ground of his being more completely or less completely supplied with money than others; of his standing at a higher or at a lower altitude in general estimation than others. For the world still appears to him, as to the young, in borrowed colours; he expects from it what it cannot give to any man; seeks for contentment, not within himself, in action and wise effort, but from without, in the kindness of circumstances, in love, friendship, honour, pecuniary ease. He would be happy, not actively and in himself, but passively and from some ideal cornucopia of Enjoyments, not earned by his own labour, but showered on him by the beneficence of Destiny. Thus, like a young man, he cannot gird himself up for any worthy well-calculated goal, but swerves to and fro, between passionate hope and remorseful disappointment: rushing onwards with a deep tempestuous force, he surmounts or breaks asunder many a barrier; travels, nay advances far, but advancing only under uncertain guidance, is ever and anon turned from his path; and to the last cannot reach the only true happiness of a man, that of clear decided Activity in the sphere for which, by nature and circumstances, he has been fitted and appointed.

We do not say these things in dispraise of Burns; nay, perhaps, they but interest us the more in his favour. This blessing is not given soonest to the best; but rather, it is often the greatest minds that are latest in obtaining it; for where most is to be developed, most time may be required to develop it. A complex condition had been assigned him from without; as complex a condition from within: no "pre-established harmony" existed between the clay soil of Mossgiel and the empyrean soul of Robert Burns; it was not wonderful that the adjustment between them should have been long postponed, and his arm long cumbered, and his sight confused, in so vast and discordant an economy as he had been appointed steward over. Byron was, at his death, but a year younger than Burns; and through life, as it might have appeared, far more simply situated: yet in him too we can trace no such adjustment, no such moral manhood; but at best, and only a little before his end, the beginning of what seemed such.

By much the most striking incident in Burns's Life is his

journey to Edinburgh; but perhaps a still more important one is his residence at Irvine, so early as in his twenty-third year. Hitherto his life had been poor and toilworn; but otherwise not ungenial, and, with all its distresses, by no means unhappy. In his parentage, deducting outward circumstances, he had every reason to reckon himself fortunate. His father was a man of thoughtful, intense, earnest character, as the best of our peasants are; valuing knowledge, possessing some, and, what is far better and rarer, open-minded for more: a man with a keen insight and devout heart; reverent towards God, friendly therefore at once, and fearless towards all that God has made: in one word, though but a hard-handed peasant, a complete and fully unfolded *Man*. Such a father is seldom found in any rank in society; and was worth descending far in society to seek. Unfortunately, he was very poor; had he been even a little richer, almost never so little, the whole might have issued far otherwise. Mighty events turn on a straw; the crossing of a brook decides the conquest of the world. Had this William Burns's small seven acres of nursery-ground anywise prospered, the boy Robert had been sent to school; had struggled forward, as so many weaker men do, to some university; come forth not as a rustic wonder, but as a regular well-trained intellectual workman, and changed the whole course of British Literature,—for it lay in him to have done this! But the nursery did not prosper; poverty sank his whole family below the help of even our cheap school-system: Burns remained a hard-worked ploughboy, and British literature took its own course. Nevertheless, even in this rugged scene there is much to nourish him. If he drudges, it is with his brother, and for his father and mother, whom he loves, and would fain shield from want. Wisdom is not banished from their poor hearth, nor the balm of natural feeling: the solemn words, *Let us worship God*, are heard there from a "priest-like father;" if threatenings of unjust men throw mother and children into tears, these are tears not of grief only, but of holiest affection; every heart in that humble group feels itself the closer knit to every other; in their hard warfare they are there together, a "little band of brethren." Neither are such tears, and the deep beauty that dwells in them, their only portion. Light visits the hearts as it does the eyes of all living: there is a force, too, in this youth, that enables him to

trample on misfortune; nay to bind it under his feet to make him sport. For a bold, warm, buoyant humour of character has been given him: and so the thick-coming shapes of evil are welcomed with a gay, friendly irony, and in their closest pressure he bates no jot of heart or hope. Vague yearnings of ambition fail not, as he grows up; dreamy fancies hang like cloud-cities around him; the curtain of Existence is slowly rising, in many-coloured splendour and gloom: and the auroral light of first love is gilding his horizon, and the music of song is on his path; and so he walks

> . . . in glory and in joy,
> Behind his plough, upon the mountain side.

We ourselves know, from the best evidence, that up to this date Burns was happy; nay, that he was the gayest, brightest, most fantastic, fascinating being to be found in the world; more so even than he ever afterwards appeared. But now, at this early age, he quits the paternal roof; goes forth into looser, louder, more exciting society; and becomes initiated in those dissipations, those vices, which a certain class of philosophers have asserted to be a natural preparative for entering on active life; a kind of mud-bath, in which the youth is, as it were, necessitated to steep, and, we suppose, cleanse himself, before the real toga of Manhood can be laid on him. We shall not dispute much with this class of philosophers; we hope they are mistaken: for Sin and Remorse so easily beset us at all stages of life, and are always such indifferent company, that it seems hard we should, at any stage, be forced and fated not only to meet but to yield to them, and even serve for a term in their leprous armada. We hope it is not so. Clear we are, at all events, it cannot be the training one receives in this Devil's-service, but only our determining to desert from it, that fits us for true manly Action. We become men, not after we have been dissipated, and disappointed in the chase of false pleasure; but after we have ascertained, in any way, what impassable barriers hem us in through this life; how mad it is to hope for contentment to our infinite soul from the *gifts* of this extremely finite world; that a man must be sufficient for himself; and that for suffering and enduring there is no remedy but striving and doing. Manhood begins when we have in any way made truce with Necessity; begins even when we have surrendered to Necessity, as the most

part only do ; but begins joyfully and hopefully only when we have reconciled ourselves to Necessity ; and thus, in reality, triumphed over it, and felt that in Necessity we are free. Surely, such lessons as this last, which, in one shape or other, is the grand lesson for every mortal man, are better learned from the lips of a devout mother, in the looks and actions of a devout father, while the heart is yet soft and pliant, than in collision with the sharp adamant of Fate, attracting us to shipwreck us, when the heart is grown hard, and may be broken before it will become contrite. Had Burns continued to learn this, as he was already learning it, in his father's cottage, he would have learned it fully, which he never did ; and been saved many a lasting aberration, many a bitter hour and year of remorseful sorrow.

It seems to us another circumstance of fatal import in Burns's history, that at this time too he became involved in the religious quarrels of his district ; that he was enlisted and feasted, as the fighting man of the New-Light Priesthood, in their highly unprofitable warfare. At the tables of these free-minded clergy he learned much more than was needful for him. Such liberal ridicule of fanaticism awakened in his mind scruples about Religion itself ; and a whole world of Doubts, which it required quite another set of conjurors than these men to exorcise. We do not say that such an intellect as his could have escaped similar doubts at some period of his history ; or even that he could, at a later period, have come through them altogether victorious and unharmed : but it seems peculiarly unfortunate that this time, above all others, should have been fixed for the encounter. For now, with principles assailed by evil example from without, by "passions raging like demons" from within, he had little need of sceptical misgivings to whisper treason in the heat of battle, or to cut off his retreat if he were already defeated. He loses his feeling of innocence ; his mind is at variance with itself ; the old divinity no longer presides there ; but wild Desires and wild Repentance alternately oppress him. Ere long, too, he has committed himself before the world ; his character for sobriety, dear to a Scottish peasant as few corrupted worldlings can even conceive, is destroyed in the eyes of men ; and his only refuge consists in trying to disbelieve his guiltiness, and is but a refuge of lies. The blackest desperation now gathers over him, broken only by red lightnings of remorse. The whole fabric of his life is blasted asunder ; for now not only his

character, but his personal liberty, is to be lost; men and Fortune are leagued for his hurt; "hungry Ruin has him in the wind." He sees no escape but the saddest of all: exile from his loved country, to a country in every sense inhospitable and abhorrent to him. While the "gloomy night is gathering fast," in mental storm and solitude, as well as in physical, he sings his wild farewell to Scotland:

> Farewell, my friends; farewell, my foes!
> My peace with these, my love with those:
> The bursting tears my heart declare;
> Adieu, my native banks of Ayr!

Light breaks suddenly in on him in floods; but still a false transitory light, and no real sunshine. He is invited to Edinburgh; hastens thither with anticipating heart; is welcomed as in a triumph, and with universal blandishment and acclamation; whatever is wisest, whatever is greatest or loveliest there, gathers round him, to gaze on his face, to show him honour, sympathy, affection. Burns's appearance among the sages and nobles of Edinburgh must be regarded as one of the most singular phenomena in modern Literature; almost like the appearance of some Napoleon among the crowned sovereigns of modern Politics. For it is nowise as "a mockery king," set there by favour, transiently and for a purpose, that he will let himself be treated; still less is he a mad Rienzi, whose sudden elevation turns his too weak head: but he stands there on his own basis; cool, unastonished, holding his equal rank from Nature herself; putting forth no claim which there is not strength *in* him, as well as about him, to vindicate. Mr. Lockhart has some forcible observations on this point:

"It needs no effort of imagination," says he, "to conceive what the sensations of an isolated set of scholars (almost all either clergymen or professors) must have been in the presence of this big-boned, black-browed, brawny stranger, with his great flashing eyes, who, having forced his way among them from the plough-tail at a single stride, manifested in the whole strain of his bearing and conversation a most thorough conviction, that in the society of the most eminent men of his nation he was exactly where he was entitled to be; hardly deigned to flatter them by exhibiting even an occasional symptom of being flattered by their notice; by turns calmly measured himself against the

most cultivated understandings of his time in discussion; overpowered the *bon-mots* of the most celebrated convivialists by broad floods of merriment, impregnated with all the burning life of genius; astounded bosoms habitually enveloped in the thrice-piled folds of social reserve, by compelling them to tremble,—nay, to tremble visibly,—beneath the fearless touch of natural pathos; and all this without indicating the smallest willingness to be ranked among those professional ministers of excitement, who are content to be paid in money and smiles for doing what the spectators and auditors would be ashamed of doing in their own persons, even if they had the power of doing it; and last, and probably worst of all, who was known to be in the habit of enlivening societies which they would have scorned to approach, still more frequently than their own, with eloquence no less magnificent; with wit, in all likelihood still more daring; often enough, as the superiors whom he fronted without alarm might have guessed from the beginning, and had ere long no occasion to guess, with wit pointed at themselves."

The farther we remove from this scene, the more singular will it seem to us: details of the exterior aspect of it are already full of interest. Most readers recollect Mr. Walker's personal interviews with Burns as among the best passages of his Narrative: a time will come when this reminiscence of Sir Walter Scott's, slight though it is, will also be precious:

"As for Burns," writes Sir Walter, "I may truly say, *Virgilium vidi tantùm*. I was a lad of fifteen in 1786–87, when he came first to Edinburgh, but had sense and feeling enough to be much interested in his poetry, and would have given the world to know him: but I had very little acquaintance with any literary people, and still less with the gentry of the west country, the two sets that he most frequented. Mr. Thomas Grierson was at that time a clerk of my father's. He knew Burns, and promised to ask him to his lodgings to dinner; but had no opportunity to keep his word; otherwise I might have seen more of this distinguished man. As it was, I saw him one day at the late venerable Professor Ferguson's, where there were several gentlemen of literary reputation, among whom I remember the celebrated Mr. Dugald Stewart. Of course, we youngsters sat silent,

looked and listened. The only thing I remember which was remarkable in Burns's manner, was the effect produced upon him by a print of Bunbury's, representing a soldier lying dead on the snow, his dog sitting in misery on one side,—on the other, his widow, with a child in her arms. These lines were written beneath :

> 'Cold on Canadian hills, or Minden's plain,
> Perhaps that mother wept her soldier slain ;
> Bent o'er her babe, her eye dissolved in dew,
> The big drops mingling with the milk he drew
> Gave the sad presage of his future years,
> The child of misery baptised in tears.'

" Burns seemed much affected by the print, or rather by the ideas which it suggested to his mind. He actually shed tears. He asked whose the lines were ; and it chanced that nobody but myself remembered that they occur in a half-forgotten poem of Langhorne's called by the unpromising title of ' The Justice of Peace.' I whispered my information to a friend present ; he mentioned it to Burns, who rewarded me with a look and a word, which, though of mere civility, I then received and still recollect with very great pleasure.

" His person was strong and robust ; his manners rustic, not clownish ; a sort of dignified plainness and simplicity, which received part of its effect perhaps from one's knowledge of his extraordinary talents. His features are represented in Mr. Nasmyth's picture : but to me it conveys the idea that they are diminished, as if seen in perspective. I think his countenance was more massive than it looks in any of the portraits. I should have taken the poet, had I not known what he was, for a very sagacious country farmer of the old Scotch school, *i.e.* none of your modern agriculturists who keep labourers for their drudgery, but the *douce gudeman* who held his own plough. There was a strong expression of sense and shrewdness in all his lineaments ; the eye alone, I think, indicated the poetical character and temperament. It was large, and of a dark cast, which glowed (I say literally *glowed*) when he spoke with feeling or interest. I never saw such another eye in a human head, though I have seen the most distinguished men of my time. His conversation expressed perfect self-confidence, without the slightest presumption. Among the men who were the most learned of their time and country, he expressed himself with perfect firmness, but without the least intrusive for-

wardness ; and when he differed in opinion, he did not hesitate to express it firmly, yet at the same time with modesty. I do not remember any part of his conversation distinctly enough to be quoted ; nor did I ever see him again, except in the street, where he did not recognize me, as I could not expect he should. He was much caressed in Edinburgh : but (considering what literary emoluments have been since his day) the efforts made for his relief were extremely trifling.

" I remember, on this occasion I mention, I thought Burns's acquaintance with English poetry was rather limited ; and also that, having twenty times the abilities of Allan Ramsay and of Ferguson, he talked of them with too much humility as his models : there was doubtless national predilection in his estimate.

" This is all I can tell you about Burns. I have only to add, that his dress corresponded with his manner. He was like a farmer dressed in his best to dine with the laird. I do not speak *in malam partem*, when I say, I never saw a man in company with his superiors in station or information more perfectly free from either the reality or the affectation of embarrassment. I was told, but did not observe it, that his address to females was extremely deferential, and always with a turn either to the pathetic or humorous, which engaged their attention particularly. I have heard the late Duchess of Gordon remark this.—I do not know anything I can add to these recollections of forty years since."

The conduct of Burns under this dazzling blaze of favour ; the calm, unaffected, manly manner in which he not only bore it, but estimated its value, has justly been regarded as the best proof that could be given of his real vigour and integrity of mind. A little natural vanity, some touches of hypocritical modesty, some glimmerings of affectation, at least some fear of being thought affected, we could have pardoned in almost any man ; but no such indication is to be traced here. In his unexampled situation the young peasant is not a moment perplexed ; so many strange lights do not confuse him, do not lead him astray. Nevertheless, we cannot but perceive that this winter did him great and lasting injury. A somewhat clearer knowledge of men's affairs, scarcely of their characters, it did afford him ; but a sharper feeling of Fortune's unequal arrangements in their social destiny it also left with him. He had seen the gay and

gorgeous arena, in which the powerful are born to play their parts; nay, had himself stood in the midst of it; and he felt more bitterly than ever, that here he was but a looker-on, and had no part or lot in that splendid game. From this time a jealous indignant fear of social degradation takes possession of him; and perverts, so far as aught could pervert, his private contentment, and his feelings towards his richer fellows. It was clear to Burns that he had talent enough to make a fortune, or a hundred fortunes, could he but have rightly willed this; it was clear also that he willed something far different, and therefore could not make one. Unhappy it was that he had not power to choose the one, and reject the other; but must halt forever between two opinions, two objects; making hampered advancement towards either. But so is it with many men: we "long for the merchandise, yet would fain keep the price;" and so stand chaffering with Fate, in vexatious altercation, till the night come, and our fair is over!

The Edinburgh Learned of that period were in general more noted for clearness of head than for warmth of heart: with the exception of the good old Blacklock, whose help was too ineffectual, scarcely one among them seems to have looked at Burns with any true sympathy, or indeed much otherwise than as at a highly curious *thing*. By the great also he is treated in the customary fashion; entertained at their tables and dismissed: certain modica of pudding and praise are, from time to time, gladly exchanged for the fascination of his presence; which exchange once effected, the bargain is finished, and each party goes his several way. At the end of this strange season, Burns gloomily sums up his gains and losses, and meditates on the chaotic future. In money he is somewhat richer; in fame and the show of happiness, infinitely richer; but in the substance of it, as poor as ever. Nay, poorer; for his heart is now maddened still more with the fever of worldly Ambition; and through long years the disease will rack him with unprofitable sufferings, and weaken his strength for all true and nobler aims.

What Burns was next to do or to avoid; how a man so circumstanced was now to guide himself towards his true advantage, might at this point of time have been a question for the wisest. It was a question, too, which apparently he was left altogether to answer for himself: of his learned or rich patrons it had not struck any individual to turn a

thought on this so trivial matter. Without claiming for Burns the praise of perfect sagacity, we must say, that his Excise and Farm scheme does not seem to us a very unreasonable one ; that we should be at a loss, even now, to suggest one decidedly better. Certain of his admirers have felt scandalized at his ever resolving to *gauge* ; and would have had him lie at the pool, till the spirit of Patronage stirred the waters, that so, with one friendly plunge, all his sorrows might be healed. Unwise counsellors ! They know not the manner of this spirit ; and how, in the lap of most golden dreams, a man might have happiness, were it not that in the interim he must die of hunger ! It reflects credit on the manliness and sound sense of Burns, that he felt so early on what ground he was standing ; and preferred self-help, on the humblest scale, to dependence and inaction, though with hope of far more splendid possibilities. But even these possibilities were not rejected in his scheme : he might expect, if it chanced that he *had* any friend, to rise, in no long period, into something even like opulence and leisure ; while again, if it chanced that he had no friend, he could still live in security ; and for the rest, he " did not intend to borrow honour from any profession." We reckon that his plan was honest and well-calculated : all turned on the execution of it. Doubtless it failed ; yet not, we believe, from any vice inherent in itself. Nay, after all, it was no failure of external means, but of internal, that overtook Burns. His was no bankruptcy of the purse, but of the soul ; to his last day, he owed no man anything.

Meanwhile he begins well : with two good and wise actions. His donation to his mother, munificent from a man whose income had lately been seven pounds a-year, was worthy of him, and not more than worthy. Generous also, and worthy of him, was the treatment of the woman whose life's welfare now depended on his pleasure. A friendly observer might have hoped serene days for him : his mind is on the true road to peace with itself : what clearness he still wants will be given as he proceeds ; for the best teacher of duties, that still lie dim to us, is the Practice of those we see and have at hand. Had the " patrons of genius," who could give him nothing, but taken nothing from him, at least nothing more ! The wounds of his heart would have healed, vulgar ambition would have died away. Toil and Frugality would have been welcome, since Virtue dwelt with them ; and Poetry would have shone through them as of old : and in her clear ethereal

light, which was his own by birthright, he might have looked down on his earthly destiny, and all its obstructions, not with patience only, but with love.

But the patrons of genius would not have it so. Picturesque tourists,* all manner of fashionable danglers after literature, and, far worse, all manner of convivial Mæcenases, hovered round him in his retreat ; and his good as well as his weak qualities secured them influence over him. He was flattered by their notice ; and his warm social nature made it impossible for him to shake them off, and hold on his way apart from them. These men, as we believe, were proximately the means of his ruin. Not that they meant him any ill ; they only meant themselves a little good ; if he suffered harm, let *him* look to it ! But they wasted his precious time and his precious talent ; they disturbed his composure, broke down his returning habits of temperance and assiduous contented exertion. Their pampering was baneful to him ; their cruelty, which soon followed, was equally baneful. The old grudge against Fortune's inequality awoke with new bitterness in their neighbourhood ; and Burns had no retreat but to "the Rock of Independence," which is but an air-castle after all, that looks well at a distance, but will screen no one from real wind and wet. Flushed with irregular excitement, exasperated alternately by contempt of others, and contempt of himself, Burns was no longer regaining his peace of mind, but fast losing it forever. There was a hollowness at the heart of his life, for his conscience did not now approve what he was doing.

Amid the vapours of unwise enjoyment, of bootless remorse, and angry discontent with Fate, his true loadstar, a

* There is one little sketch by certain "English gentlemen" of this class, which, though adopted in Currie's Narrative, and since then repeated in most others, we have all along felt an invincible disposition to regard as imaginary : "On a rock that projected into the stream they saw a man employed in angling, of a singular appearance. He had a cap made of fox-skin on his head, a loose greatcoat fixed round him by a belt, from which depended an enormous Highland broadsword. It was Burns." Now, we rather think, it was *not* Burns. For, to say nothing of the fox-skin cap, the loose and quite Hibernian watchcoat with the belt, what are we to make of this "enormous Highland broad-sword" depending from him ? More especially, as there is no word of parish constables on the outlook to see whether, as Dennis phrases it, he had an eye to his own midriff or that of the public ! Burns, of all men, had the least need, and the least tendency, to seek for distinction, either in his own eyes, or those of others, by such poor mummeries.

life of Poetry, with Poverty, nay, with Famine, if it must be so, was too often altogether hidden from his eyes. And yet he sailed a sea, where without some such loadstar there was no right steering. Meteors of French Politics rise before him, but these were not *his* stars. An accident this, which hastened, but did not originate, his worst distresses. In the mad contentions of that time, he comes in collision with certain official Superiors; is wounded by them; cruelly lacerated, we should say, could a dead mechanical implement, in any case, be called cruel: and shrinks, in indignant pain, into deeper self-seclusion, into gloomier moodiness than ever. His life has now lost its unity: it is a life of fragments; led with little aim, beyond the melancholy one of securing its own continuance,—in fits of wild false joy when such offered, and of black despondency when they passed away. His character before the world begins to suffer: calumny is busy with him; for a miserable man makes more enemies than friends. Some faults he has fallen into, and a thousand misfortunes; but deep criminality is what he stands accused of, and they that are *not* without sin cast the first stone at him! For is he not a well-wisher to the French Revolution, a Jacobin, and therefore in that one act guilty of all? These accusations, political and moral, it has since appeared, were false enough: but the world hesitated little to credit them. Nay, his convivial Mæcenases themselves were not the last to do it. There is reason to believe that, in his later years, the Dumfries Aristocracy had partly withdrawn themselves from Burns, as from a tainted person, no longer worthy of their acquaintance. That painful class, stationed, in all provincial cities, behind the outmost breastwork of Gentility, there to stand siege and do battle against the intrusions of Grocerdom and Grazierdom, had actually seen dishonour in the society of Burns, and branded him with their veto; had, as we vulgarly say, *cut* him! We find one passage in this Work of Mr. Lockhart's, which will not out of our thoughts:

"A gentleman of that county, whose name I have already more than once had occasion to refer to, has often told me that he was seldom more grieved, than when riding into Dumfries one fine summer evening about this time to attend a county ball, he saw Burns walking alone, on the shady side of the principal street of the town, while the opposite side was gay with successive groups of gentlemen and ladies, all

drawn together for the festivities of the night, not one of whom appeared willing to recognize him. The horseman dismounted, and joined Burns, who on his proposing to cross the street said : ' Nay, nay, my young friend, that's all over now ; ' and quoted, after a pause, some verses of Lady Grizzel Baillie's pathetic ballad :

> ' His bonnet stood ance fu' fair on his brow,
> His auld ane look'd better than mony ane's new ;
> But now he lets 't wear ony way it will hing,
> And casts himsell dowie upon the corn-bing.
>
> O, were we young as we ance hae been,
> We sud hae been gallopping down on yon green,
> And linking it ower the lily-white lea !
> *And werena my heart light, I wad die.*'

It was little in Burns's character to let his feelings on certain subjects escape in this fashion. He, immediately after reciting these verses, assumed the sprightliness of his most pleasing manner ; and taking his young friend home with him, entertained him very agreeably till the hour of the ball arrived."

Alas ! when we think that Burns now sleeps " where bitter indignation can no longer lacerate his heart," * and that most of those fair dames and frizzled gentlemen already lie at his side, where the breastwork of gentility is quite thrown down,—who would not sigh over the thin delusions and foolish toys that divide heart from heart, and make man unmerciful to his brother !

It was not now to be hoped that the genius of Burns would ever reach maturity, or accomplish aught worthy of itself. His spirit was jarred in its melody ; not the soft breath of natural feeling, but the rude hand of Fate, was now sweeping over the strings. And yet what harmony was in him, what music even in his discords ! How the wild tones had a charm for the simplest and the wisest ; and all men felt and knew that here also was one of the Gifted ! " If he entered an inn at midnight, after all the inmates were in bed, the news of his arrival circulated from the cellar to the garret ; and ere ten minutes had elapsed, the landlord and all his guests were assembled ! " Some

* *Ubi sæva indignatio cor ulterius lacerare nequit.* Swift's Epitaph.

brief pure moments of poetic life were yet appointed him, in the composition of his Songs. We can understand how he grasped at this employment; and how, too, he spurned all other reward for it but what the labour itself brought him. For the soul of Burns, though scathed and marred, was yet living in its full moral strength, though sharply conscious of its errors and abasement: and here, in his destitution and degradation, was one act of seeming nobleness and self-devotedness left even for him to perform. He felt, too, that with all the "thoughtless follies" that had "laid him low," the world was unjust and cruel to him; and he silently appealed to another and calmer time. Not as a hired soldier, but as a patriot, would he strive for the glory of his country: so he cast from him the poor sixpence a-day, and served zealously as a volunteer. Let us not grudge him this last luxury of his existence; let him not have appealed to us in vain! The money was not necessary to him; he struggled through without it: long since, these guineas would have been gone, and now the high-mindedness of refusing them will plead for him in all hearts forever.

We are here arrived at the crisis of Burns's life; for matters had now taken such a shape with him as could not long continue. If improvement was not to be looked for, Nature could only for a limited time maintain this dark and maddening warfare against the world and itself. We are not medically informed whether any continuance of years was, at this period, probable for Burns; whether his death is to be looked on as in some sense an accidental event, or only as the natural consequence of the long series of events that had preceded. The latter seems to be the likelier opinion; and yet it is by no means a certain one. At all events, as we have said, *some* change could not be very distant. Three gates of deliverance, it seems to us, were open for Burns: clear poetical activity; madness; or death. The first, with longer life, was still possible, though not probable; for physical causes were beginning to be concerned in it: and yet Burns had an iron resolution; could he but have seen and felt, that not only his highest glory, but his first duty, and the true medicine for all his woes, lay here. The second was still less probable; for his mind was ever among the clearest and firmest. So the milder third gate was opened for him: and he passed, not softly yet speedily, into that still country, where the hail-

storms and fire-showers do not reach, and the heaviest-laden wayfarer at length lays down his load!

Contemplating this sad end of Burns, and how he sank unaided by any real help, uncheered by any wise sympathy, generous minds have sometimes figured to themselves, with a reproachful sorrow, that much might have been done for him; that by counsel, true affection and friendly ministrations, he might have been saved to himself and the world. We question whether there is not more tenderness of heart than soundness of judgment in these suggestions. It seems dubious to us whether the richest, wisest, most benevolent individual could have lent Burns any effectual help. Counsel, which seldom profits any one, he did not need; in his understanding, he knew the right from the wrong, as well perhaps as any man ever did; but the persuasion, which would have availed him, lies not so much in the head as in the heart, where no argument or expostulation could have assisted much to implant it. As to money again, we do not believe that this was his essential want; or well see how any private man could, even presupposing Burns's consent, have bestowed on him an independent fortune, with much prospect of decisive advantage. It is a mortifying truth, that two men in any rank of society could hardly be found virtuous enough to give money, and to take it as a necessary gift, without injury to the moral entireness of one or both. But so stands the fact: Friendship, in the old heroic sense of that term, no longer exists; except in the cases of kindred or other legal affinity, it is in reality no longer expected, or recognized as a virtue among men. A close observer of manners has pronounced "Patronage," that is, pecuniary or other economic furtherance, to be "twice cursed," cursing him that gives, and him that takes! And thus, in regard to outward matters also, it has become the rule, as in regard to inward it always was and must be the rule, that no one shall look for effectual help to another; but that each shall rest contented with what help he can afford himself. Such, we say, is the principle of modern Honour; naturally enough growing out of that sentiment of Pride, which we inculcate and encourage as the basis of our whole social morality. Many a poet has been poorer than Burns; but no one was ever prouder: we may question whether, without great precautions, even a pension from Royalty

would not have galled and encumbered, more than actually assisted him.

Still less, therefore, are we disposed to join with another class of Burns's admirers, who accuse the higher ranks among us of having ruined Burns by their selfish neglect of him. We have already stated our doubts whether direct pecuniary help, had it been offered, would have been accepted, or could have proved very effectual. We shall readily admit, however, that much was to be done for Burns; that many a poisoned arrow might have been warded from his bosom; many an entanglement in his path cut asunder by the hand of the powerful; and light and heat, shed on him from high places, would have made his humble atmosphere more genial; and the softest heart then breathing might have lived and died with some fewer pangs. Nay, we shall grant farther, and for Burns it is granting much, that, with all his pride, he would have thanked, even with exaggerated gratitude, any one who had cordially befriended him: patronage, unless once cursed, needed not to have been twice so. At all events, the poor promotion he desired in his calling might have been granted: it was his own scheme, therefore likelier than any other to be of service. All this it might have been a luxury, nay, it was a duty, for our nobility to have done. No part of all this, however, did any of them do; or apparently attempt, or wish to do; so much is granted against them. But what then is the amount of their blame? Simply that they were men of the world, and walked by the principles of such men; that they treated Burns, as other nobles and other commoners had done other poets; as the English did Shakspeare; as King Charles and his Cavaliers did Butler, as King Philip and his Grandees did Cervantes. Do men gather grapes of thorns; or shall we cut down our thorns for yielding only a *fence* and haws? How, indeed, could the "nobility and gentry of his native land" hold out any help to this "Scottish Bard, proud of his name and country"? Were the nobility and gentry so much as able rightly to help themselves? Had they not their game to preserve; their borough interests to strengthen; dinners, therefore, of various kinds to eat and give? Were their means more than adequate to all this business, or less than adequate? Less than adequate, in general; few of them in reality were richer than Burns; many of them were poorer; for

sometimes they had to wring their supplies, as with thumb-screws, from the hard hand; and, in their need of guineas, to forget their duty of mercy; which Burns was never reduced to do. Let us pity and forgive them. The game they preserved and shot, the dinners they ate and gave, the borough interests they strengthened, the *little* Babylons they severally builded by the glory of their might, are all melted or melting back into the primeval Chaos, as man's merely selfish endeavours are fated to do: and here was an action, extending, in virtue of its worldly influence, we may say, through all time; in virtue of its moral nature, beyond all time, being immortal as the Spirit of Goodness itself; this action was offered them to do, and light was not given them to do it. Let us pity and forgive them. But better than pity, let us go and *do otherwise*. Human suffering did not end with the life of Burns; neither was the solemn mandate, "Love one another, bear one another's burdens," given to the rich only, but to all men. True, we shall find no Burns to relieve, to assuage by our aid or our pity; but celestial natures, groaning under the fardels of a weary life, we shall still find; and that wretchedness which Fate has rendered *voiceless* and *tuneless* is not the least wretched, but the most.

Still, we do not think that the blame of Burns's failure lies chiefly with the world. The world, it seems to us, treated him with more rather than with less kindness than it usually shows to such men. It has ever, we fear, shown but small favour to its Teachers: hunger and nakedness, perils and revilings, the prison, the cross, the poison-chalice have, in most times and countries, been the market-price it has offered for Wisdom, the welcome with which it has greeted those who have come to enlighten and purify it. Homer and Socrates, and the Christian Apostles, belong to old days; but the world's Martyrology was not completed with these. Roger Bacon and Galileo languish in priestly dungeons; Tasso pines in the cell of a madhouse; Camoens dies begging on the streets of Lisbon. So neglected, so "persecuted they the Prophets," not in Judea only, but in all places where men have been. We reckon that every poet of Burns's order is, or should be, a prophet and teacher to his age; that he has no right to expect great kindness from it, but rather is bound to do it great kindness; that Burns, in particular, experienced fully the usual proportion of the world's goodness; and that

the blame of his failure, as we have said, lies not chiefly with the world.

Where, then, does it lie? We are forced to answer: With himself; it is his inward, not his outward misfortunes that bring him to the dust. Seldom, indeed, is it otherwise; seldom is a life morally wrecked but the grand cause lies in some internal mal-arrangement, some want less of good fortune than of good guidance. Nature fashions no creature without implanting in it the strength needful for its action and duration; least of all does she so neglect her masterpiece and darling, the poetic soul. Neither can we believe that it is in the power of *any* external circumstances utterly to ruin the mind of a man; nay, if proper wisdom be given him, even so much as to affect its essential health and beauty. The sternest sum-total of all worldly misfortunes is Death; nothing more *can* lie in the cup of human woe: yet many men, in all ages, have triumphed over Death, and led it captive; converting its physical victory into a moral victory for themselves, into a seal and immortal consecration for all that their past life had achieved. What has been done, may be done again; nay, it is but the degree and not the kind of such heroism that differs in different seasons; for without some portion of this spirit, not of boisterous daring, but of silent fearlessness, of Self-denial in all its forms, no good man, in any scene or time, has ever attained to be good.

We have already stated the error of Burns; and mourned over it, rather than blamed it. It was the want of unity in his purposes, of consistency in his aims; the hapless attempt to mingle in friendly union the common spirit of the world with the spirit of poetry, which is of a far different and altogether irreconcilable nature. Burns was nothing wholly, and Burns could be nothing, no man formed as he was can be anything, by halves. The heart, not of a mere hot-blooded, popular Verse-monger, or poetical *Restaurateur*, but of a true Poet and Singer, worthy of the old religious heroic times, had been given him: and he fell in an age, not of heroism and religion, but of scepticism, selfishness and triviality, when true Nobleness was little understood, and its place supplied by a hollow, dissocial, altogether barren and unfruitful principle of Pride. The influences of that age, his open, kind, susceptible nature, to say nothing of his highly untoward situation, made it more than usually difficult for him to cast aside, or rightly

subordinate; the better spirit that was within him ever sternly demanded its rights, its supremacy: he spent his life in endeavouring to reconcile these two; and lost it, as he must lose it, without reconciling them.

Burns was born poor; and born also to continue poor, for he would not endeavour to be otherwise: this it had been well could he have once for all admitted, and considered as finally settled. He was poor, truly; but hundreds even of his own class and order of minds have been poorer, yet have suffered nothing deadly from it: nay, his own Father had a far sorer battle with ungrateful destiny than his was; and he did not yield to it, but died courageously warring, and to all moral intents prevailing, against it. True, Burns had little means, had even little time for poetry, his only real pursuit and vocation; but so much the more precious was what little he had. In all these external respects his case was hard; but very far from the hardest. Poverty, incessant drudgery and much worse evils, it has often been the lot of Poets and wise men to strive with, and their glory to conquer. Locke was banished as a traitor; and wrote his *Essay on the Human Understanding* sheltering himself in a Dutch garret. Was Milton rich or at his ease when he composed *Paradise Lost*? Not only low, but fallen from a height; not only poor, but impoverished; in darkness and with dangers compassed round, he sang his immortal song, and found fit audience, though few. Did not Cervantes finish his work, a maimed soldier and in prison? Nay, was not the *Araucana*, which Spain acknowledges as its Epic, written without even the aid of paper; on scraps of leather, as the stout fighter and voyager snatched any moment from that wild warfare?

And what, then, had these men, which Burns wanted? Two things; both which, it seems to us, are indispensable for such men. They had a true, religious principle of morals; and a single, not a double aim in their activity. They were not self-seekers and self-worshippers; but seekers and worshippers of something far better than Self. Not personal enjoyment was their object; but a high, heroic idea of Religion, of Patriotism, of heavenly Wisdom, in one or the other form, ever hovered before them; in which cause they neither shrank from suffering, nor called on the earth to witness it as something wonderful; but patiently endured, counting it blessedness enough so to

spend and be spent. Thus the " golden-calf of Self-love," however curiously carved, was not their Deity ; but the Invisible Goodness, which alone is man's reasonable service. This feeling was as a celestial fountain, whose streams refreshed into gladness and beauty all the provinces of their otherwise too desolate existence. In a word, they willed one thing, to which all other things were subordinated and made subservient ; and therefore they accomplished it. The wedge will rend rocks ; but its edge must be sharp and single : if it be double, the wedge is bruised in pieces and will rend nothing.

Part of this superiority these men owed to their age ; in which heroism and devotedness were still practised, or at least not yet disbelieved in : but much of it likewise they owed to themselves. With Burns, again, it was different. His morality, in most of its practical points, is that of a mere worldly man ; enjoyment, in a finer or coarser shape, is the only thing he longs and strives for. A noble instinct sometimes raises him above this ; but an instinct only, and acting only for moments. He has no Religion ; in the shallow age, where his days were cast, Religion was not discriminated from the New and Old Light *forms* of Religion ; and was, with these, becoming obsolete in the minds of men. His heart, indeed, is alive with a trembling adoration, but there is no temple in his understanding. He lives in darkness and in the shadow of doubt. His religion, at best, is an anxious wish ; like that of Rabelais, " a great Perhaps."

He loved Poetry warmly, and in his heart ; could he but have loved it purely, and with his whole undivided heart, it had been well. For Poetry, as Burns could have followed it, is but another form of Wisdom, of Religion ; is itself Wisdom and Religion. But this also was denied him. His poetry is a stray vagrant gleam, which will not be extinguished within him, yet rises not to be the true light of his path, but is often a wildfire that misleads him. It was not necessary for Burns to be rich, to be, or to seem, " independent ; " but it *was* necessary for him to be at one with his own heart ; to place what was highest in his nature highest also in his life ; " to seek within himself for that consistency and sequence, which external events would forever refuse him." He was born a poet ; poetry was the celestial element of his being, and should have been the soul of his whole endeavours. Lifted into that serene

ether, whither he had wings given him to mount, he would have needed no other elevation: poverty, neglect and all evil, save the desecration of himself and his Art, were a small matter to him; the pride and the passions of the world lay far beneath his feet; and he looked down alike on noble and slave, on prince and beggar, and all that wore the stamp of man, with clear recognition, with brotherly affection, with sympathy, with pity. Nay, we question whether for his culture as a Poet poverty and much suffering for a season were not absolutely advantageous. Great men, in looking back over their lives, have testified to that effect. "I would not for much," says Jean Paul, "that I had been born richer." And yet Paul's birth was poor enough; for, in another place, he adds: "The prisoner's allowance is bread and water; and I had often only the latter." But the gold that is refined in the hottest furnace comes out the purest; or, as he has himself expressed it, "the canary-bird sings sweeter the longer it has been trained in a darkened cage."

A man like Burns might have divided his hours between poetry and virtuous industry; industry which all true feeling sanctions, nay, prescribes, and which has a beauty, for that cause, beyond the pomp of thrones: but to divide his hours between poetry and rich men's banquets was an ill-starred and inauspicious attempt. How could he be at ease at such banquets? What had he to do there, mingling his music with the coarse roar of altogether earthly voices; brightening the thick smoke of intoxication with fire lent him from heaven? Was it his aim to *enjoy* life? Tomorrow he must go drudge as an Exciseman! We wonder not that Burns became moody, indignant, and at times an offender against certain rules of society; but rather that he did not grow utterly frantic, and run *amuck* against them all. How could a man, so falsely placed, by his own or others' fault, ever know contentment or peaceable diligence for an hour? What he did, under such perverse guidance, and what he forbore to do, alike fill us with astonishment at the natural strength and worth of his character.

Doubtless there was a remedy for this perverseness; but not in others; only in himself; least of all in simple increase of wealth and worldly "respectability." We hope we have now heard enough about the efficacy of wealth for poetry, and to make poets happy. Nay, have we not

seen another instance of it in these very days? Byron, a man of an endowment considerably less ethereal than that of Burns, is born in the rank not of a Scottish ploughman, but of an English peer: the highest worldly honours, the fairest worldly career, are his by inheritance; the richest harvest of fame he soon reaps, in another province, by his own hand. And what does all this avail him? Is he happy, is he good, is he true? Alas, he has a poet's soul, and strives towards the Infinite and the Eternal; and soon feels that all this is but mounting to the housetop to reach the stars! Like Burns, he is only a proud man; might, like him, have "purchased a pocket-copy of Milton to study the character of Satan;" for Satan also is Byron's grand exemplar, the hero of his poetry, and the model apparently of his conduct. As in Burns's case, too, the celestial element will not mingle with the clay of earth; both poet and man of the world he must not be; vulgar Ambition will not live kindly with poetic Adoration; he *cannot* serve God and Mammon. Byron, like Burns, is not happy; nay, he is the most wretched of all men. His life is falsely arranged: the fire that is in him is not a strong, still, central fire, warming into beauty the products of a world; but it is the mad fire of a volcano; and now—we look sadly into the ashes of a crater, which ere long will fill itself with snow!

Byron and Burns were sent forth as missionaries to their generation, to teach it a higher Doctrine, a purer Truth; they had a message to deliver, which left them no rest till it was accomplished; in dim throes of pain, this divine behest lay smouldering within them; for they knew not what it meant, and felt it only in mysterious anticipation, and they had to die without articulately uttering it. They are in the camp of the Unconverted; yet not as high messengers of rigorous though benignant truth, but as soft flattering singers, and in pleasant fellowship will they live there: they are first adulated, then persecuted; they accomplish little for others; they find no peace for themselves, but only death and the peace of the grave. We confess, it is not without a certain mournful awe that we view the fate of these noble souls, so richly gifted, yet ruined to so little purpose with all their gifts. It seems to us there is a stern moral taught in this piece of history,—*twice* told us in our own time! Surely to men of like genius, if there be any such, it carries with it a lesson of

deep impressive significance. Surely it would become such a man, furnished for the highest of all enterprises, that of being the Poet of his Age, to consider well what it is that he attempts, and in what spirit he attempts it. For the words of Milton are true in all times, and were never truer than in this: "He who would write heroic poems must make his whole life a heroic poem." If he cannot first so make his life, then let him hasten from this arena; for neither its lofty glories, nor its fearful perils, are fit for him. Let him dwindle into a modish balladmonger; let him worship and besing the idols of the time, and the time will not fail to reward him. If, indeed, he can endure to live in that capacity! Byron and Burns could not live as idol-priests, but the fire of their own hearts consumed them; and better it was for them that they could not. For it is not in the favour of the great or of the small, but in a life of truth, and in the inexpugnable citadel of his own soul, that a Byron's or a Burns's strength must lie. Let the great stand aloof from him, or know how to reverence him. Beautiful is the union of wealth with favour and furtherance for literature; like the costliest flower-jar enclosing the loveliest amaranth. Yet let not the relation be mistaken. A true poet is not one whom they can hire by money or flattery to be a minister of their pleasures, their writer of occasional verses, their purveyor of table-wit; he cannot be their menial, he cannot even be their partisan. At the peril of both parties, let no such union be attempted! Will a Courser of the Sun work softly in the harness of a Dray-horse? His hoofs are of fire, and his path is through the heavens, bringing light to all lands; will he lumber on mud highways, dragging ale for earthly appetites from door to door?

But we must stop short in these considerations, which would lead us to boundless lengths. We had something to say on the public moral character of Burns; but this also we must forbear. We are far from regarding him as guilty before the world, as guiltier than the average; nay, from doubting that he is less guilty than one of ten thousand. Tried at a tribunal far more rigid than that where the *Plebiscita* of common civic reputations are pronounced, he has seemed to us even there less worthy of blame than of pity and wonder. But the world is habitually unjust in its judgments of such men; unjust on many grounds, of which this one may be stated as the substance: It decides, like a

court of law, by dead statutes; and not positively but negatively, less on what is done right, than on what is or is not done wrong. Not the few inches of deflection from the mathematical orbit, which are so easily measured, but the *ratio* of these to the whole diameter, constitutes the real aberration. This orbit may be a planet's, its diameter the breadth of the solar system; or it may be a city hippodrome; nay, the circle of a gin-horse, its diameter a score of feet or paces. But the inches of deflection only are measured: and it is assumed that the diameter of the gin-horse, and that of the planet, will yield the same ratio when compared with them! Here lies the root of many a blind, cruel condemnation of Burnses, Swifts, Rousseaus, which one never listens to with approval. Granted, the ship comes into harbour with shrouds and tackle damaged; the pilot is blameworthy; he has not been all-wise and all-powerful: but to know *how* blameworthy, tell us first whether his voyage has been round the Globe, or only to Ramsgate and the Isle of Dogs.

With our readers in general, with men of right feeling anywhere, we are not required to plead for Burns. In pitying admiration he lies enshrined in all our hearts, in a far nobler mausoleum than that one of marble; neither will his Works, even as they are, pass away from the memory of men. While the Shakspeares and Miltons roll on like mighty rivers through the country of Thought, bearing fleets of traffickers and assiduous pearl-fishers on their waves; this little Vaclusa Fountain will also arrest our eye: for this also is of Nature's own and most cunning workmanship, bursts from the depths of the earth, with a full gushing current, into the light of day; and often will the traveller turn aside to drink of its clear waters, and muse among its rocks and pines!

SIR WALTER SCOTT

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[1838]

American Cooper asserts, in one of his books, that there is "an instinctive tendency in men to look at any man who has become distinguished." True, surely: as all observation and survey of mankind, from China to Peru, from Nebuchadnezzar to Old Hickory, will testify! Why do men crowd towards the improved-drop at Newgate, eager to catch a sight? The man about to be hanged is in a distinguished situation. Men crowd to such extent, that Greenacre's is not the only life choked-out there. Again, ask of these leathern vehicles, cabriolets, neat-flies, with blue men and women in them, that scour all thoroughfares, Whither so fast? To see dear Mrs. Rigmarole, the distinguished female; great Mr. Rigmarole, the distinguished male! Or, consider that crowning phenomenon, and summary of modern civilization, a *soirée* of lions. Glittering are the rooms, well-lighted, thronged; bright flows their undulatory flood of blonde-gowns and dress-coats, a soft smile dwelling on all faces; for behold there also flow the lions, hovering distinguished: oracles of the age, of one sort or another. Oracles really pleasant to see; whom it is worth while to go and see: look at them, but inquire not of them, depart rather and be thankful. For your lion-*soirée* admits not of speech; there lies the specialty of it. A meeting together of human creatures; and yet (so high has civilization gone) the primary aim of human meeting, that soul might in some articulate utterance unfold itself to soul, can be dispensed with in it. Utterance there is not; nay, there is a certain grinning play of tongue-fence, and make-believe of utterance, considerably worse than none. For which reason it has been suggested, with an eye to sincerity and silence in such lion-*soirées*, Might not each lion be, for example, ticketed, as wine-decanters are? Let him carry, slung round him, in

such ornamental manner as seemed good, his silver label with name engraved ; you lift his label, and read it, with what farther ocular survey you find useful, and speech is not needed at all. O Fenimore Cooper, it is most true there is " an instinctive tendency in men to look at any man that has become distinguished ; " and, moreover, an instinctive desire in men to become distinguished and be looked at !

For the rest, we will call it a most valuable tendency this ; indispensable to mankind. Without it, where were star-and-garter, and significance of rank ; where were all ambition, money-getting, respectability of gig or no gig ; and, in a word, the main impetus by which society moves, the main force by which it hangs together ? A tendency, we say, of manifold results ; of manifold origin, not ridiculous only, but sublime ;—which some incline to deduce from the mere gregarious purblind nature of man, prompting him to run, " as dim-eyed animals do, towards any glittering object, were it but a scoured tankard, and mistake it for a solar luminary," or even " sheeplike, to run and crowd because many *have* already run ! " It is indeed curious to consider how men do make the gods that themselves worship. For the most famed man, round whom all the world rapturously huzzahs and venerates, as if his like were not, is the same man whom all the world was wont to jostle into the kennels ; not a changed man, but in every fibre of him the same man. Foolish world, what went ye out to see ? A tankard scoured bright ; and do there not lie, of the self-same pewter, whole barrowfuls of tankards, though by worse fortune all still in the dim state ?

And yet, at bottom, it is not merely our gregarious sheep-like quality, but something better, and indeed best : what has been called " the perpetual fact of hero-worship ; " our inborn sincere love of great men ! Not the gilt farthing, for its own sake, do even fools covet ; but the gold guinea which they mistake it for. Veneration of great men is perennial in the nature of man ; this, in all times, especially in these, is one of the blessedest facts predicable of him. In all times, even in these seemingly so disobedient times, " it remains a blessed fact, so cunningly has Nature ordered it, *that whatsoever man ought to obey, he cannot but obey.* Show the dullest clodpole, show the haughtiest featherhead, that a soul higher than himself is actually here ; were his knees stiffened into brass, he must down and worship." So it has been written ; and may be cited and repeated till known to

all. Understand it well, this of "hero-worship" was the primary creed, and has intrinsically been the secondary and ternary, and will be the ultimate and final creed of mankind; indestructible, changing in shape, but in essence unchangeable; whereon polities, religions, loyalties, and all highest human interests have been and can be built, as on a rock that will endure while man endures. Such is hero-worship; so much lies in that our inborn sincere love of great men!—In favour of which unspeakable benefits of the reality, what can we do but cheerfully pardon the multiplex ineptitudes of the semblance; cheerfully wish even lion-*soirées*, with labels for their lions or without that improvement, all manner of prosperity? Let hero-worship flourish, say we; and the more and more assiduous chase after gilt farthings while guineas are not yet forthcoming. Herein, at lowest, is proof that guineas exist, that they are believed to exist, and valued. Find great men if you can; if you cannot, still quit not the search; in defect of great men, let there be noted men, in such number, to such degree of intensity as the public appetite can tolerate.

Whether Sir Walter Scott was a great man is still a question with some; but there can be no question with any one that he was a most noted and even notable man. In this generation there was no literary man with such a popularity in any country; there have only been a few with such, taking in all generations and all countries. Nay, it is farther to be admitted that Sir Walter Scott's popularity was of a select sort rather; not a popularity of the populace. His admirers were at one time almost all the intelligent of civilized countries; and to the last included, and do still include, a great portion of that sort. Such fortune he had, and has continued to maintain for a space of some twenty or thirty years. So long the observed of all observers; a great man, or only a considerable man; here surely, if ever, is a singularly circumstanced, is a "distinguished" man! In regard to whom, therefore, the "instinctive tendency" on other men's part cannot be wanting. Let men look, where the world has already so long looked. And now, while the new earnestly expected *Life* "by his son-in-law and literary executor" again summons the whole world's attention round him, probably for the last time it will ever be so summoned, and men are in some sort taking leave of a notability, and about to go their way, and commit him to his fortune on

the flood of things, why should not this Periodical Publication likewise publish its thought about him ? Readers of miscellaneous aspect, of unknown quantity and quality, are waiting to hear it done. With small inward vocation, but cheerfully obedient to destiny and necessity, the present reviewer will follow a multitude : to do evil or to do no evil, will depend not on the multitude but on himself. One thing he did decidedly wish ; at least to wait till the Work were finished : for the Six promised Volumes, as the world knows, have flowed over into a Seventh, which will not for some weeks yet see the light. But the editorial powers, wearied with waiting, have become peremptory ; and declare that, finished or not finished, they will have their hands washed of it at this opening of the year. Perhaps it is best. The physiognomy of Scott will not be much altered for us by that Seventh Volume ; the prior Six have altered it but little ;—as, indeed, a man who has written some two-hundred volumes of his own, and lived for thirty years amid the universal speech of friends, must have already left some likeness of himself. Be it as the peremptory editorial powers require.

First, therefore, a word on the *Life* itself. Mr. Lockhart's known powers justify strict requisition in his case. Our verdict in general would be, that he has accomplished the work he schemed for himself in a creditable workmanlike manner. It is true, his notion of what the work was does not seem to have been very elevated. To picture-forth the life of Scott according to any rules of art or composition, so that a reader, on adequately examining it, might say to himself, " There is Scott, there is the physiognomy and meaning of Scott's appearance and transit on this earth ; such was he by nature, so did the world act on him, so he on the world, with such result and significance for himself and us : " this was by no manner of means Mr. Lockhart's plan. A plan which, it is rashly said, should preside over every biography ! It might have been fulfilled with all degrees of perfection, from that of the *Odyssey* down to *Thomas Ellwood* or lower. For there is no heroic poem in the world but is at bottom a biography, the life of a man : also, it may be said, there is no life of a man, faithfully recorded, but is a heroic poem of its sort, rhymed or unrhymed. It is a plan one would prefer, did it otherwise suit ; which it does not, in these days. Seven volumes sell so much dearer than one ; are so much easier to write than one. The *Odyssey*, for instance, what were the value of the *Odyssey* sold per sheet ? One paper of

Pickwick ; or say, the inconsiderable fraction of one. This, in commercial algebra, were the equation : *Odyssey* equal to *Pickwick* divided by an unknown integer.

There is a great discovery still to be made in Literature, that of paying literary men by the quantity they *do not* write. Nay, in sober truth, is not this actually the rule in all writing ; and, moreover, in all conduct and acting ? Not what stands above ground, but what lies unseen *under* it, as the root and subterrene element it sprang from and emblemed forth, determines the value. Under all speech that is good for anything there lies a silence that is better. Silence is deep as Eternity ; speech is shallow as Time. Paradoxical does it seem ? Woe for the age, woe for the man, quack-ridden, bespeeched, bespouted, blown about like barren Sahara, to whom this world-old truth were altogether strange !—Such we say is the rule, acted on or not, recognized or not ; and he who departs from it, what can he do but spread himself into breadth and length, into superficiality and saleability ; and, except as filigree, become comparatively useless ? One thinks, Had but the hogshead of thin wash, which sours in a week ready for the kennels, been *distilled*, been concentrated ! Our dear Fenimore Cooper, whom we started with, might, in that way, have given us one *Natty Leatherstocking*, one melodious synopsis of Man and Nature in the West (for it lay in him to do it), almost as a Saint-Pierre did for the Islands of the East ; and the hundred Incoherences, cobbled hastily together by order of Colburn and Company, had slumbered in Chaos, as all incoherences ought if possible to do. Verily this same genius of diffuse-writing, of diffuse-acting, is a Moloch ; and souls pass through the fire to him, more than enough. Surely, if ever discovery was valuable and needful, it were that above indicated, of paying by the work *not* visibly done !—Which needful discovery we will give the whole projecting, railwaying, knowledge-diffusing, march-of-intellect and otherwise promotive and locomotive societies in the Old and New World, any required length of centuries to make. Once made, such discovery once made, we too will fling cap into the air, and shout, " *Io Pæan !* the Devil *is* conquered ; " —and, in the *mean* while, study to think it nothing miraculous that seven biographical volumes are given where one had been better ; and that several other things happen, very much as they from of old were known to do, and are like to continue doing.

Mr. Lockhart's aim, we take it, was not that of producing any such high-flown work of art as we hint at: or indeed to do much other than to print, intelligibly bound together by order of time, and by some requisite intercalary exposition, all such letters, documents and notices about Scott as he found lying suitable, and as it seemed likely the world would undertake to read. His Work, accordingly, is not so much a composition, as what we may call a compilation well done. Neither is this a task of no difficulty; this too is a task that may be performed with extremely various degrees of talent: from the *Life and Correspondence of Hannah More*, for instance, up to this *Life of Scott*, there is a wide range indeed! Let us take the Seven Volumes, and be thankful that they are genuine in their kind. Nay, as to that of their being seven and not one, it is right to say that the public so required it. To have done other, would have shown little policy in an author. Had Mr. Lockhart laboriously compressed himself, and instead of well-done compilation, brought out the well-done composition, in one volume instead of seven, which not many men in England are better qualified to do, there can be no doubt but his readers for the time had been immeasurably fewer. If the praise of magnanimity be denied him, that of prudence must be conceded, which perhaps he values more.

The truth is, the work, done in this manner too, was good to have: Scott's Biography, if uncomposed, lies printed and indestructible here, in the elementary state, and can at any time be composed, if necessary, by whosoever has a call to that. As it is, as it was meant to be, we repeat, the work is vigorously done. Sagacity, decision, candour, diligence, good manners, good sense: these qualities are throughout observable. The dates, calculations, statements, we suppose to be all accurate; much laborious inquiry, some of it impossible for another man, has been gone into, the results of which are imparted with due brevity. Scott's letters, not interesting generally, yet never absolutely without interest, are copiously given; copiously but with selection; the answers to them still more select. Narrative, delineation, and at length personal reminiscences, occasionally of much merit, of a certain rough force, sincerity and picturesqueness, duly intervene. The scattered members of Scott's Life do lie here, and could be disentangled. In a word, this compilation is the work of a manful, clear-seeing, conclusive man, and has been executed with the faculty and combina-

tion of faculties the public had a right to expect from the name attached to it.

One thing we hear greatly blamed in Mr. Lockhart: that he has been too communicative, indiscreet, and has recorded much that ought to have lain suppressed. Persons are mentioned, and circumstances, not always of an ornamental sort. It would appear there is far less reticence than was looked for! Various persons, name and surname, have "received pain:" nay, the very Hero of the Biography is rendered unheroic; unornamental facts of him, and of those he had to do with, being set forth in plain English: hence "personality," "indiscretion," or worse, "sanctities of private life," etc., etc. How delicate, decent is English Biography, bless its mealy mouth! A Damocles' sword of *Respectability* hangs forever over the poor English Life-writer (as it does over poor English Life in general), and reduces him to the verge of paralysis. Thus it has been said, "there are no English lives worth reading except those of Players, who by the nature of the case have bidden Respectability good-day." The English biographer has long felt that if in writing his Man's Biography, he wrote down anything that could by possibility offend any man, he had written wrong. The plain consequence was, that, properly speaking, no biography whatever could be produced. The poor biographer, having the fear *not* of God before his eyes, was obliged to retire as it were into vacuum; and write in the most melancholy, straitened manner, with only vacuum for a result. Vain that he wrote, and that we kept reading volume on volume; there was no biography, but some vague ghost of a biography, white, stainless; without feature or substance; *vacuum*, as we say, and wind and shadow,—which indeed the material of it was.

No man lives without jostling and being jostled; in all ways he has to *elbow* himself through the world, giving and receiving offence. His life is a battle, in so far as it is an entity at all. The very oyster, we suppose, comes in collision with oysters: undoubtedly enough it does come in collision with Necessity and Difficulty; and helps itself through, not as a perfect ideal oyster, but as an imperfect real one. Some kind of remorse must be known to the oyster; certain hatreds, certain pusillanimities. But as for man, his conflict is continual with the spirit of contradiction, that is without and within; with the evil spirit (or call it, with the weak, most necessitous, pitiable spirit), that is in

others and in himself. His walk, like all walking (say the mechanicians), is a series of *falls*. To paint man's life is to represent these things. Let them be represented, fitly, with dignity and measure ; but above all, let them be represented. No tragedy of *Hamlet* with the part of Hamlet omitted by particular desire ! No ghost of a biography, let the Damocles' sword of Respectability (which, after all, is but a pasteboard one) threaten as it will ! One hopes that the public taste is much mended in this matter ; that vacuum-biographies, with a good many other vacuities related to them, are withdrawn or withdrawing into vacuum. Probably it was Mr. Lockhart's feeling of what the great public would approve, that led him, open-eyed, into this offence against the small criticizing public : we joyfully accept the omen.

Perhaps then, of all the praises copiously bestowed on his Work, there is none in reality so creditable to him as this same censure, which has also been pretty copious. It is a censure better than a good many praises. He is found guilty of having said this and that, calculated not to be entirely pleasant to this man and that ; in other words, calculated to give him and the thing he worked in a living set of features, not leave him vague, in the white beatified-ghost condition. Several men, as we hear, cry out, " See, there is something written not entirely pleasant to me ! " Good friend, it is pity ; but who can help it ? They that will crowd about bonfires may, sometimes very fairly, get their beards singed ; it is the price they pay for such illumination ; natural twilight is safe and free to all. For our part, we hope all manner of biographies that are written in England will henceforth be written so. If it is fit that they be written otherwise, then it is still fitter that they be not written at all : to produce not things but ghosts of things can never be the duty of man.

The biographer has this problem set before him : to delineate a likeness of the earthly pilgrimage of a man. He will compute well what profit is in it, and what disprofit ; under which latter head this of offending any of his fellow-creatures will surely not be forgotten. Nay, this may so swell the disprofit side of his account, that many an enterprise of biography, otherwise promising, shall require to be renounced. But once taken up, the rule before all rules is to do *it*, not to do the ghost of it. In speaking of the man and men he has to deal with, he will of course keep all his

charities about him ; but all his eyes open. Far be it from him to set down aught *untrue* ; nay, not to abstain from, and leave in oblivion, much that is true. But having found a thing or things essential for his subject, and well computed the for and against, he will in very deed set down such thing or things, nothing doubting,—*having*, we may say, the fear of God before his eyes, and no other fear whatever. Censure the biographer's prudence ; dissent from the computation he made, or agree with it ; be all malice of his, be all falsehood, nay, be all offensive avoidable inaccuracy, condemned and consumed ; but know that by this plan only, executed as was possible, could the biographer hope to make a biography ; and blame him not that he did what it had been the worst fault not to do.

As to the accuracy or error of these statements about the Ballantynes and other persons aggrieved, which are questions much mooted at present in some places, we know nothing at all. If they are inaccurate, let them be corrected ; if the inaccuracy was avoidable, let the author bear rebuke and punishment for it. We can only say, these things carry no look of inaccuracy on the face of them ; neither is anywhere the smallest trace of ill-will or unjust feeling discernible. Decidedly the probabilities are, and till better evidence arise, the fair conclusion is, that this matter stands very much as it ought to do. Let the clatter of censure, therefore, propagate itself as far as it can. For Mr. Lockhart it virtually amounts to this very considerable praise, that, standing full in the face of the public, he has set at nought, and been among the first to do it, a public piece of cant ; one of the commonest we have, and closely allied to many others of the fellest sort, as smooth as it looks.

The other censure, of Scott being made unheroic, springs from the same stem ; and is, perhaps, a still more wonderful flower of it. Your true hero must have no features, but be white, stainless, an impersonal ghost-hero ! But connected with this, there is a hypothesis now current, due probably to some man of name, for its own force would not carry it far ; That Mr. Lockhart at heart has a dislike to Scott, and has done his best in an underhand treacherous manner to dishero him ! Such hypothesis is actually current : he that has ears may hear it now and then. On which astonishing hypothesis, if a word must be said, it can only be an apology for silence,—" That there are things at which one stands struck silent, as at first sight of the Infinite." For if Mr.

Lockhart is fairly chargeable with any radical defect, if on any side his insight entirely fails him, it seems even to be in this, that Scott is altogether lovely to him; that Scott's greatness spreads out for him on all hands beyond reach of eye; that his very faults become beautiful, his vulgar worldlinesses are solid prudences, proprieties; and of his worth there is no measure. Does not the patient Biographer dwell on his *Abbots*, *Pirates*, and hasty theatrical scene-paintings; affectionately analysing them, as if they were Raphael-pictures, time-defying *Hamlets*, *Othellos*? The Novel-manufactory, with its £15,000 a-year, is sacred to him as creation of a genius, which carries the noble victor up to Heaven. Scott is to Lockhart the unparalleled of the time; an object spreading-out before him like a sea without shore. Of *that* astonishing hypothesis, let expressive silence be the only answer.

And so in sum, with regard to *Lockhart's Life of Scott*, readers that believe in us shall read it with the feeling that a man of talent, decision and insight wrote it; wrote it in seven volumes, not in one, because the public would pay for it better in that state; but wrote it with courage, with frankness, sincerity; on the whole, in a very readable, recommendable manner, as things go. Whosoever needs it can purchase it, or purchase the loan of it, with assurance more than usual that he has ware for his money. And now enough of the written *Life*; we will glance a little at the man and his acted life.

Into the question whether Scott was a great man or not, we do not propose to enter deeply. It is, as too usual, a question about words. There can be no doubt but many men have been named and printed *great* who were vastly smaller than he: as little doubt moreover that of the specially *good*, a very large portion, according to any genuine standard of man's worth, were worthless in comparison to him. He for whom Scott is great may most innocently name him so; may with advantage admire his great qualities, and ought with sincere heart to emulate them. At the same time, it is good that there be a certain degree of precision in our epithets. It is good to understand, for one thing, that no popularity, and open-mouthed wonder of all the world, continued even for a long series of years, can make a man great. Such popularity is a remarkable fortune; indicates a great adaptation of the

man to his element of circumstances; but may or may not indicate anything great in the man. To our imagination, as above hinted, there is a certain apotheosis in it; but in the reality no apotheosis at all. Popularity is as a blaze of illumination, or alas, of conflagration, kindled round a man; *showing* what is in him; not putting the smallest item more into him; often abstracting much from him; conflagrating the poor man himself into ashes and *caput mortuum*! And then, by the nature of it, such popularity is transient; your "series of years," quite unexpectedly, sometimes almost all on a sudden, terminates! For the stupidity of men, especially of men congregated in masses round any object, is extreme. What illuminations and conflagrations have kindled themselves, as if new heavenly suns had risen, which proved only to be tar-barrels and terrestrial locks of straw! Profane Princesses cried out, "One God, one Farinelli!"—and whither now have they and Farinelli danced?

In Literature too there have been seen popularities greater even than Scott's, and nothing perennial in the interior of them. Lope de Vega, whom all the world swore by, and made a proverb of; who could make an acceptable five-act tragedy in almost as many hours; the greatest of all popularities past or present, and perhaps one of the greatest men that ever ranked among popularities: Lope himself, so radiant, far-shining, has not proved to be a sun or star of the firmament; but is as good as lost and gone out; or plays at best in the eyes of some few as a vague aurora-borealis, and brilliant ineffectuality. The great man of Spain sat obscure at the time, all dark and poor, a maimed soldier; writing his *Don Quixote* in prison. And Lope's fate withal was sad, his popularity perhaps a curse to him; for in this man there was something ethereal too, a divine particle traceable in few other popular men; and such far-shining diffusion of himself, though all the world swore by it, would do nothing for the true life of him even while he lived: he had to creep into a convent, into a monk's cowl, and learn, with infinite sorrow, that his blessedness had lain elsewhere; that when a man's life feels itself to be sick and an error, no voting of bystanders can make it well and a truth again.

Or coming down to our own times, was not August Kotzebue popular? Kotzebue, not so many years since, saw himself, if rumour and hand-clapping could be credited,

the greatest man going ; saw visibly his Thoughts, dressed-out in plush and pasteboard, permeating and perambulating civilized Europe ; the most iron visages weeping with him, in all theatres from Cadiz to Kamtchatka ; his own "astonishing genius" meanwhile producing two tragedies or so per month : he, on the whole, blazed high enough : he too has gone out into Night and *Orcus*, and already is not. We will omit this of popularity altogether ; and account it as making simply nothing towards Scott's greatness or non-greatness, as an accident, not a quality.

Shorn of this falsifying *nimbus*, and reduced to his own natural dimensions, there remains the reality, Walter Scott, and what we can find in him : to be accounted great, or not great, according to the dialects of men. Friends to precision of epithet will probably deny his title to the name "great." It seems to us there goes other stuff to the making of great men than can be detected here. One knows not what idea worthy of the name of great, what purpose, instinct or tendency, that could be called great, Scott ever was inspired with. His life was worldly ; his ambitions were worldly. There is nothing spiritual in him ; all is economical, material, of the earth earthy. A love of picturesque, of beautiful, vigorous and graceful things ; a genuine love, yet not more genuine than has dwelt in hundreds of men named minor poets : this is the highest quality to be discerned in him.

His power of representing these things, too, his poetic power, like his moral power, was a genius *in extenso*, as we may say, not *in intenso*. In action, in speculation, *broad* as he was, he rose nowhere high ; productive without measure as to quantity, in quality he for the most part transcended but a little way the region of commonplace. It has been said, "no man has written as many volumes with so few sentences that can be quoted." Winged words were not his vocation ; nothing urged him that way : the great Mystery of Existence was not great to him ; did not drive him into rocky solitudes to wrestle with it for an answer, to be answered or to perish. He had nothing of the martyr ; into no "dark region to slay monsters for us," did he, either led or driven, venture down : his conquests were for his own behoof mainly, conquests over common market-labour, and reckonable in good metallic coin of the realm. The thing he had faith in, except power, power of what sort soever, and even of the rudest

sort, would be difficult to point out. One sees not that he believed in anything ; nay he did not even disbelieve ; but quietly acquiesced, and made himself at home in a world of conventionalities ; the false, the semi-false and the true were alike true in this, that they were there, and had power in their hands more or less. It was well to feel so ; and yet not well ! We find it written, " Woe to them that are at ease in Zion ; " but surely it is a double woe to them that are at ease in Babel, in Domdaniel. On the other hand, he wrote many volumes, amusing many thousands of men. Shall we call this great ? It seems to us there dwells and struggles another sort of spirit in the inward parts of great men !

Brother Ringletub, the missionary, inquired of Ram-Dass, a Hindoo man-god, who had set up for godhood lately, What he meant to do, then, with the sins of mankind ? To which Ram-Dass at once answered, He had *fire enough in his belly* to burn-up all the sins in the world. Ram-Dass was right so far, and had a spice of sense in him ; for surely it is the test of every divine man this same, and without it he is not divine or great,—that he *have* fire in him to burn-up somewhat of the sins of the world, of the miseries and errors of the world : why else is he there ? Far be it from us to say that a great man must needs, with benevolence prepense, become a " friend of humanity ; " nay that such professional self-conscious friends of humanity are not the fatalest kind of persons to be met with in our day. All greatness is unconscious, or it is little and nought. And yet a great man without *such* fire in him, burning dim or developed, as a divine behest in his heart of hearts, never resting till it be fulfilled, were a solecism in Nature. A great man is ever, as the Transcendentalists speak, possessed with an *idea*.

Napoleon himself, not the superfinest of great men, and ballasted sufficiently with prudences and egoisms, had nevertheless, as is clear enough, an idea to start with : the idea that Democracy was the Cause of Man, the right and infinite Cause. Accordingly he made himself " the armed Soldier of Democracy ; " and did vindicate it in a rather great manner. Nay, to the very last, he had a kind of idea ; that, namely, of " *La carrière ouverte aux talens*, The tools to him that can handle them ; " really one of the best ideas yet promulgated on that matter, or rather the one true central idea, towards which all the others, if they tend

anywhither, must tend. Unhappily it was in the military province only that Napoleon could realize this idea of his, being forced to fight for himself the while: before he got it tried to any extent in the civil province of things, his head by much victory grew light (no head can stand more than its quantity); and he lost head, as they say, and became a selfish ambitionist and quack, and was hurled out; leaving his idea to be realized, in the civil province of things, by others! Thus was Napoleon; thus are all great men: children of the idea; or, in Ram-Dass's phraseology, furnished with fire to burn-up the miseries of men. Conscious or unconscious, latent or unfolded, there is small vestige of any such fire being extant in the inner-man of Scott.

Yet on the other hand, the surliest critic must allow that Scott was a genuine man, which itself is a great matter. No affectation, fantasticality or distortion dwelt in him; no shadow of cant. Nay withal, was he not a right brave and strong man, according to his kind? What a load of toil, what a measure of felicity, he quietly bore along with him; with what quiet strength he both worked on this earth, and enjoyed in it; invincible to evil fortune and to good! A most composed invincible man; in difficulty and distress knowing no discouragement, Samson-like carrying off on his strong Samson-shoulders the gates that would imprison him; in danger and menace laughing at the whisper of fear. And then, with such a sunny current of true humour and humanity, a free joyful sympathy with so many things; what of fire he had all lying so beautifully *latent*, as radical latent heat, as fruitful internal warmth of life; a most robust, healthy man! The truth is, our best definition of Scott were perhaps even this, that he was, if no great man, then something much pleasanter to be, a robust, thoroughly healthy and withal very prosperous and victorious man. An eminently well-conditioned man, healthy in body, healthy in soul; we will call him one of the *healthiest* of men.

Neither is this a small matter: health is a great matter, both to the possessor of it and to others. On the whole, that humorist in the Moral Essay was not so far out, who determined on honouring health only; and so instead of humbling himself to the high-born, to the rich and well-dressed, insisted on doffing hat to the healthy: coroneted carriages with pale faces in them passed by as failures,

miserable and lamentable; trucks with ruddy-cheeked strength dragging at them were greeted as successful and venerable. For does not health mean harmony, the synonym of all that is true, justly-ordered, good; is it not, in some sense, the net-total, as shown by experiment, of whatever worth is in us? The healthy man is the most meritorious product of Nature so far as he goes. A healthy body is good; but a soul in right health,—it is the thing beyond all others to be prayed for; the blessedest thing this earth receives of Heaven. Without artificial medicament of philosophy, or tight-lacing of creeds (always very questionable), the healthy soul discerns what is good, and adheres to it, and retains it; discerns what is bad, and spontaneously casts it off. An instinct from Nature herself, like that which guides the wild animals of the forest to their food, shows him what he shall do, what he shall abstain from. The false and foreign will not adhere to him; cant and all fantastic diseased incrustations are impossible;—as Walker the *Original*, in such eminence of health was *he* for his part, *could* not, by much abstinence from soap-and-water, attain to a dirty face! This thing thou canst work with and profit by, this thing is substantial and worthy; that other thing thou canst not work with, it is trivial and inapt: so speaks unerringly the inward monition of the man's whole nature. No need of logic to prove the most argumentative absurdity absurd; as Goethe says of himself, "all this ran down from me like water from a man in waxcloth dress." Blessed is the healthy nature; it is the coherent, sweetly coöperative, not incoherent, self-distracting, self-destructive one! In the harmonious adjustment and play of all the faculties, the just balance of oneself gives a just feeling towards all men and all things. Glad light from within radiates outwards, and enlightens and embellishes.

Now all this can be predicated of Walter Scott, and of no British literary man that we remember in these days, to any such extent,—if it be not perhaps of one, the most opposite imaginable to Scott, but his equal in this quality and what holds of it: William Cobbett! Nay there are other similarities, widely different as they two look; nor be the comparison disparaging to Scott: for Cobbett also, as the pattern John Bull of his century, strong as the rhinoceros, and with singular humanities and genialities shining through his thick skin, is a most brave phenomenon.

So bounteous was Nature to us ; in the sickliest of recorded ages, when British Literature lay all puking and sprawling in Werterism, Byronism, and other Sentimentalism tearful or spasmodic (fruit of internal *wind*). Nature was kind enough to send us two healthy Men, of whom she might still say, not without pride, "These also were made in England ; such limbs do I still make there !" It is one of the cheerfulest sights, let the question of its greatness be settled as you will. A healthy nature may or may not be great ; but there is no great nature that is not healthy.

Or, on the whole, might we not say, Scott, in the new vesture of the nineteenth century, was intrinsically very much the old fighting Borderer of prior centuries ; the kind of man Nature did of old make in that birthland of his ? In the saddle, with the foray-spear, he would have acquitted himself as he did at the desk with his pen. One fancies how, in stout *Beardie* of Harden's time, he could have played Beardie's part ; and *been* the stalwart buff-belted *terræ filius* he in this late time could only delight to draw. The same stout self-help was in him ; the same oak and triple brass round his heart. He could too have fought at Redswire, cracking crowns with the fiercest, if that had been the task ; could have harried cattle in Tynedale, repaying injury with compound interest ; a right sufficient captain of men. A man without qualms or fantasticalities ; a hard-headed, sound-hearted man, of joyous robust temper, looking to the main chance, and fighting direct thitherward ; *valde stalwartus homo !*—How much in that case had slumbered in him, and passed away without sign ! But indeed who knows how much slumbers in many men ? Perhaps our greatest poets are the *mute* Miltons ; the vocals are those whom by happy accident we lay hold of, one here, one there, as it chances, and *make* vocal. It is even a question, whether, had not want, discomfort and distress-warrants been busy at Stratford-on-Avon, Shakspeare himself had not lived killing calves or combing wool ! Had the Edial Boarding-school turned out well, we had never heard of Samuel Johnson ; Samuel Johnson had been a fat schoolmaster and dogmatic gerundgrinder, and never known that he was more. Nature is rich : those two eggs thou art eating carelessly to breakfast, could they not have been hatched into a pair of fowls, and have covered the whole world with poultry ?

But it was not harrying of cattle in Tynedale, or cracking

of crowns at Redswire, that this stout Border-chief was appointed to perform. Far other work. To be the song-singer and pleasant tale-teller to Britain and Europe, in the beginning of the artificial nineteenth century; here, and not there, lay his business. Beardie of Harden would have found it very amazing. How he shapes himself to this new element; how he helps himself along in it, makes it too do for him, lives sound and victorious in it, and leads over the marches such a spoil as all the cattle-droves the Hardens ever took were poor in comparison to; this is the history of the life and achievements of *our* Sir Walter Scott, Baronet;—whereat we are now to glance for a little! It is a thing remarkable; a thing substantial; of joyful, victorious sort; not unworthy to be glanced at. Withal, however, a glance here and there will suffice. Our limits are narrow; the thing, were it never so victorious, is not of the sublime sort, nor extremely edifying; there is nothing in it to censure vehemently, nor love vehemently; there is more to wonder at than admire; and the whole secret is not an abstruse one.

Till towards the age of thirty, Scott's life has nothing in it decisively pointing towards Literature, or indeed towards distinction of any kind; he is wedded, settled, and has gone through all his preliminary steps, without symptom of renown as yet. It is the life of every other Edinburgh youth of his station and time. Fortunate we must name it, in many ways. Parents in easy or wealthy circumstances, yet unencumbered with the cares and perversions of aristocracy; nothing eminent in place, in faculty or culture, yet nothing deficient; all around is methodic regulation, prudence, prosperity, kindheartedness; an element of warmth and light, of affection, industry and burgherly comfort, heightened into elegance; in which the young heart can wholesomely grow. A vigorous health seems to have been given by Nature; yet, as if Nature had said withal, "Let it be a health to express itself by mind, not by body," a lameness is added in childhood; the brave little boy, instead of romping and bickering, must learn to think; or at lowest, what is a great matter, to sit still. No rackets and trundling-hoops for this young Walter; but ballads, history-books and a world of legendary stuff, which his mother and those near him are copiously able to furnish. Disease, which is but superficial, and

issues in outward lameness, does not cloud the young existence; rather forwards it towards the expansion it is fitted for. The miserable disease had been one of the internal nobler parts, marring the general organization; under which no Walter Scott could have been forwarded, or with all his other endowments could have been producible or possible. "Nature gives healthy children much; how much! Wise education is a wise unfolding of this; often it unfolds itself better of its own accord."

Add one other circumstance: the place where; namely, Presbyterian Scotland. The influences of this are felt incessantly, they stream-in at every pore. "There is a country accent," says La Rochefoucault, "not in speech only, but in thought, conduct, character and manner of existing, which never forsakes a man." Scott, we believe, was all his days an Episcopalian Dissenter in Scotland; but that makes little to the matter. Nobody who knows Scotland and Scott can doubt but Presbyterianism too had a vast share in the forming of him. A country where the entire people is, or even once has been, laid hold of, filled to the heart with an infinite religious idea, has "made a step from which it cannot retrograde." Thought, conscience, the sense that man is denizen of a Universe, creature of an Eternity, has penetrated to the remotest cottage, to the simplest heart. Beautiful and awful, the feeling of a Heavenly Behest, of Duty god-commanded, over-canopies all life. There is an inspiration in such a people: one may say in a more special sense, "the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." Honour to all the brave and true; everlasting honour to brave old Knox, one of the truest of the true! That, in the moment while he and his cause, amid civil broils, in convulsion and confusion, were still but struggling for life, he sent the schoolmaster forth to all corners, and said, "Let the people be taught:" this is but one, and indeed an inevitable and comparatively inconsiderable item in his great message to men. His message, in its true compass, was, "Let men know that they are men; created by God, responsible to God; who work in any meanest moment of time what will last through eternity." It is verily a great message. Not ploughing and hammering machines, not patent-digesters (never so ornamental) to digest the produce of these: no, in no wise; born slaves neither of their fellow-men, nor of their own appetites; but men! This

great message Knox did deliver, with a man's voice and strength ; and found a people to believe him.

Of such an achievement, we say, were it to be made once only, the results are immense. Thought, in such a country, may change its form, but cannot go out ; the country has attained *majority* ; thought, and a certain spiritual manhood, ready for all work that man can do, endures there. It may take many forms : the form of hard-fisted money-getting industry, as in the vulgar Scotchman, in the vulgar New Englander ; but as compact developed force and alertness of faculty, it is still there ; it may utter itself one day as the colossal Scepticism of a Hume (beneficent this too though painful, wrestling Titan-like through doubt and inquiry towards new belief) ; and again, some better day, it may utter itself as the inspired Melody of a Burns : in a word, it is there, and continues to manifest itself, in the Voice and the Work of a Nation of hardy endeavouring considering men, with whatever that may bear in it, or unfold from it. The Scotch national character originates in many circumstances ; first of all, in the Saxon stuff there was to work on ; but next, and beyond all else except that, in the Presbyterian Gospel of John Knox. It seems a good national character ; and on some sides not so good. Let Scott thank John Knox, for he owed him much, little as he dreamed of debt in that quarter ! No Scotchman of his time was more entirely Scotch than Walter Scott : the good and the not so good, which all Scotchmen inherit, ran through every fibre of him.

Scott's childhood, school-days, college-days, are pleasant to read of, though they differ not from those of others in his place and time. The memory of him may probably enough last till this record of them become far more curious than it now is. " So lived an Edinburgh Writer to the Signet's son in the end of the eighteenth century," may some future Scotch novelist say to himself in the end of the twenty-first ! The following little fragment of infancy is all we can extract. It is from an Autobiography which he had begun, which one cannot but regret he did not finish. Scott's best qualities never shone out more freely than when he went upon anecdote and reminiscence. Such a master of narrative and of himself could have done personal narrative well. Here, if anywhere, his knowledge was complete, and all his humour and good-humour had free scope :

"An odd incident is worth recording. It seems, my mother had sent a maid to take charge of me, at this farm of Sandy-Knowe, that I might be no inconvenience to the family. But the damsel sent on that important mission had left her heart behind her, in the keeping of some wild fellow, it is likely, who had done and said more to her than he was like to make good. She became extremely desirous to return to Edinburgh; and, as my mother made a point of her remaining where she was, she contracted a sort of hatred at poor me, as the cause of her being detained at Sandy-Knowe. This rose, I suppose, to a sort of delirious affection; for she confessed to old Alison Wilson, the housekeeper, that she had carried me up to the craigs under a strong temptation of the Devil to cut my throat with her scissors, and bury me in the moss. Alison instantly took possession of my person, and took care that her confidant should not be subject to any farther temptation, at least so far as I was concerned. She was dismissed of course, and I have heard afterwards became a lunatic.

"It is here, at Sandy-Knowe, in the residence of my paternal grandfather, already mentioned, that I have the first consciousness of existence; and I recollect distinctly that my situation and appearance were a little whimsical. Among the odd remedies recurred to, to aid my lameness, some one had recommended that so often as a sheep was killed for the use of the family, I should be stripped, and swathed-up in the skin warm as it was flayed from the carcass of the animal. In this Tartar-like habiliment I well remember lying upon the floor of the little parlour in the farmhouse, while my grandfather, a venerable old man with white hair, used every excitement to make me try to crawl. I also distinctly remember the late Sir George M'Dougal of Mackerstown, father of the present Sir Henry Hay M'Dougal, joining in the attempt. He was, God knows how, a relation of ours; and I still recollect him, in his old-fashioned military habit (he had been Colonel of the Greys), with a small cocked-hat deeply laced, an embroidered scarlet waistcoat, and a light-coloured coat, with milk-white locks tied in a military fashion, kneeling on the ground before me, and dragging his watch along the carpet to induce me to follow it. The benevolent old soldier, and the infant wrapped in his sheepskin, would have afforded an odd group to uninterested spectators. This must have happened about my third year (1774), for

Sir George M'Dougal and my grandfather both died shortly after that period." *

We will glance next into the "*Liddesdale Raids.*" Scott has grown-up to be a brisk-hearted jovial young man and Advocate: in vacation-time he makes excursions to the Highlands, to the Border Cheviots and Northumberland; rides free and far, on his stout galloway, through bog and brake, over the dim moory Debatable Land,—over Flodden and other fields and places, where, though he yet knew it not, his work lay. No land, however dim and moory, but either has had or will have its poet, and so become not unknown in song. Liddesdale, which was once as prosaic as most dales, having now attained illustration, let us glance thitherward: Liddesdale too is on this ancient Earth of ours, under this eternal Sky; and gives and takes, in the most incalculable manner, with the Universe at large! Scott's experiences there are rather of the rustic Arcadian sort; the element of whisky not wanting. We should premise that here and there a feature has, perhaps, been aggravated for effect's sake:

"During seven successive years," writes Mr. Lockhart (for the Autobiography has long since left us), "Scott made a *raid*, as he called it, into Liddesdale with Mr. Shortreed, sheriff-substitute of Roxburgh, for his guide; exploring every rivulet to its source, and every ruined *peel* from foundation to battlement. At this time no wheeled carriage had ever been seen in the district;—the first, indeed, was a gig, driven by Scott himself for a part of his way, when on the last of these seven excursions. There was no inn nor publichouse of any kind in the whole valley; the travellers passed from the shepherd's hut to the minister's manse, and again from the cheerful hospitality of the manse to the rough and jolly welcome of the homestead; gathering, wherever they went, songs and tunes, and occasionally more tangible relics of antiquity,—even such a 'rowth of auld knicknackets' as Burns ascribes to Captain Grose. To these rambles Scott owed much of the materials of his *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*; and not less of that intimate acquaintance with the living manners of these unsophisticated regions, which constitutes the chief charm of

* Vol. i. pp. 15–17.

one of the most charming of his prose works. But how soon he had any definite object before him in his researches seems very doubtful. 'He was *makin' himsell* a' the time,' said Mr. Shortreed; 'but he didna ken maybe what he was about till years had passed; at first he thought o' little, I daresay, but the queerness and the fun.'

"'In those days,' says the Memorandum before me, 'advocates were not so plenty—at least about Liddesdale;' and the worthy Sheriff-substitute goes on to describe the sort of bustle, not unmixed with alarm, produced at the first farmhouse they visited (Willie Elliot's at Millburnholm), when the honest man was informed of the quality of one of his guests. When they dismounted, accordingly, he received Mr. Scott with great ceremony, and insisted upon himself leading his horse to the stable. Shortreed accompanied Willie, however; and the latter, after taking a deliberate peep at Scott, 'out-by the edge of the door-cheek,' whispered, 'Weel, Robin, I say, de'il hae me if I's be a bit feared for him now; he's just a chield like ourselves, I think.' Half-a-dozen dogs of all degrees had already gathered round 'the advocate,' and his way of returning their compliments had set Willie Elliot at once at his ease.

"According to Mr. Shortreed, this good man of Millburnholm was the great original of Dandie Dinmont." . . . "They dined at Millburnholm; and, after having lingered over Willie Elliot's punch-bowl, until, in Mr. Shortreed's phrase, they were 'half-glowrin',' mounted their steeds again, and proceeded to Dr. Elliot's at Cleughhead, where ('for,' says my Memorandum, 'folk werena very nice in those days') the two travellers slept in one and the same bed,—as, indeed, seems to have been the case with them throughout most of their excursions in this primitive district. Dr. Elliot (a clergyman) had already a large MS. collection of the ballads Scott was in quest of." . . . "Next morning they seem to have ridden a long way for the express purpose of visiting one 'auld Thomas o' Tuzzilehope,' another Elliot, I suppose, who was celebrated for his skill on the Border pipe, and in particular for being in possession of the real *lilt* * of *Dick o' the Cowe*. Before starting, that is, at six o'clock, the ballad-hunters had, 'just to lay the stomach, a devilled duck or twae and some *London* porter.' Auld Thomas found them, nevertheless, well disposed for 'breakfast' on their

* Loud tune: German, *lallen*.

arrival at Tuzzilehope ; and this being over, he delighted them with one of the most hideous and unearthly of all specimens of ' riding music,' and, moreover, with considerable libations of whisky-punch, manufactured in a certain wooden vessel, resembling a very small milkpail, which he called ' Wisdom,' because it ' made ' only a few spoonfuls of spirits,—though he had the art of replenishing it so adroitly, that it had been celebrated for fifty years as more fatal to sobriety than any bowl in the parish. Having done due honour to ' Wisdom,' they again mounted, and proceeded over moss and moor to some other equally hospitable master of the pipe. ' Ah me,' says Shortreed, ' sic an endless fund o' humour and drollery as he then had wi' him ! Never ten yards but we were either laughing or roaring and singing. Wherever we stopped, how brawlie he suited himsell to everybody ! He aye did as the lave did ; never made himsell the great man, or took ony airs in the company. I've seen him in a' moods in these jaunts, grave and serious, sober and drunk—(this, however, even in our wildest rambles, was rare)—but, drunk or sober, he was aye the gentleman. He lookit excessively heavy and stupid when he was *fou*, but he was never out o' gude humour.' "

These are questionable doings, questionably narrated ; but what shall we say of the following, wherein the element of whisky plays an extremely prominent part ? We will say that it *is* questionable, and not exemplary, whisky mounting clearly beyond its level ; that indeed charity hopes and conjectures here may be some aggravating of features for effect's sake !

" On reaching, one evening, some *Charlieshope* or other (I forget the name) among those wildernesses, they found a kindly reception, as usual ; but, to their agreeable surprise after some days of hard living, a measured and orderly hospitality as respected liquor. Soon after supper, at which a bottle of elderberry-wine alone had been produced, a young student of divinity, who happened to be in the house, was called upon to take the ' big ha' Bible,' in the good old fashion of ' Burns's Saturday night ; ' and some progress had been already made in the service, when the good-man of the farm, whose ' tendency,' as Mr. Mitchell says, ' was soporific,' scandalized his wife and the dominie by starting suddenly from his knees, and, rubbing his eyes, with a stentorian

exclamation of 'By ——, here's the keg at last!' and in tumbled, as he spoke the word, a couple of sturdy herdsmen, whom, on hearing a day before of the advocate's approaching visit, he had dispatched to a certain smuggler's haunt, at some considerable distance, in quest of *run* brandy from the Solway Firth. The pious 'exercise' of the household was hopelessly interrupted. With a thousand apologies for his hitherto shabby entertainment, this jolly Elliot, or Armstrong, had the welcome *keg* mounted on the table without a moment's delay; and gentle and simple, not forgetting the dominie, continued carousing about it until daylight streamed in upon the party. Sir Walter Scott seldom failed, when I saw him in company with his Liddesdale companion, to mimic with infinite humour the sudden outburst of his old host on hearing the clatter of horses' feet, which he knew to indicate the arrival of the keg—the consternation of the dame—and the rueful despair with which the young clergyman closed the book." *

From which Liddesdale *raids*, which we here, like the young clergyman, close not without a certain rueful despair, let the reader draw what nourishment he can. They evince satisfactorily, though in a rude manner, that in those days young advocates, and Scott like the rest of them, were *alive* and alert,—whisky sometimes preponderating. But let us now fancy that the jovial young Advocate has pleaded his first cause; has served in yeomanry drills; been wedded, been promoted Sheriff, without romance in either case; dabbling a little the while, under guidance of Monk Lewis, in translations from the German, in translation of Goethe's *Götz with the Iron Hand*;—and we have arrived at the threshold of the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, and the opening of a new century.

Hitherto, therefore, there has been made out, by Nature and Circumstance working together, nothing unusually remarkable, yet still something very valuable; a stout effectual man of thirty, full of broad sagacity and good humour, with faculties in him fit for any burden of business, hospitality and duty, legal or civic:—with what other faculties in him no one could yet say. As indeed, who, after lifelong inspection, can say what is in any man? The uttered part of man's life, let us always repeat, bears to

* Vol. i. pp. 195–199.

the unuttered unconscious part a small unknown proportion ; he himself never knows it, much less do others. Give him room, give him *impulse* ; he reaches down to the Infinite with that so straitly-imprisoned soul of his ; and *can* do miracles if need be ! It is one of the comfortablest truths that great men abound, though in the unknown state. Nay, as above hinted, our greatest, being also by nature our *quietest,* are perhaps those that remain unknown ! Philosopher Fichte took comfort in this belief, when from all pulpits and editorial desks, and publications periodical and stationary, he could hear nothing but the infinite chattering and twittering of commonplace become ambitious ; and in the infinite stir of motion nowhither, and of din which should have been silence, all seemed churned into one tempestuous yesty froth, and the stern Fichte almost desired " taxes on knowledge " to allay it a little ;—he comforted himself, we say, by the unshaken belief that Thought did still exist in Germany ; that thinking men, each in his own corner, were verily doing their work, though in a silent latent manner.*

Walter Scott, as a latent Walter, had never amused all men for a score of years in the course of centuries and eternities, or gained and lost several hundred thousand pounds sterling by Literature ; but he might have been a happy and by no means a useless,—nay, who knows at bottom whether not a still usefuler Walter ! However, that was not his fortune. The Genius of rather a singular age,—an age at once destitute of faith and terrified at scepticism, with little knowledge of its whereabout, with many sorrows to bear or front, and on the whole with a life to lead in these new circumstances,—had said to himself : What man shall be the temporary comforter, or were it but the spiritual comfit-maker, of this my poor singular age, to solace its dead tedium and manifold sorrows a little ? So had the Genius said, looking over all the world, What man ? and found him walking the dusty Outer Parliament-house of Edinburgh, with his advocate-gown on his back ; and exclaimed, That is he !

The *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* proved to be a well from which flowed one of the broadest rivers. Metrical Romances (which in due time pass into Prose Romances) ; the old life of men resuscitated for us ; it is a mighty word !

* Fichte, *Über das Wesen des Gelehrten.*

Not as dead tradition, but as a palpable presence, the past stood before us. There they were, the rugged old fighting men; in their doughty simplicity and strength, with their heartiness, their healthiness, their stout self-help, in their iron basnets, leather jerkins, jack-boots, in their quaintness of manner and costume; there as they looked and lived: it was like a new-discovered continent in Literature; for the new century, a bright El Dorado,—or else some fat beatific land of Cockaigne, and Paradise of Donothings. To the opening nineteenth century, in its languor and paralysis, nothing could have been welcomer. Most unexpected, most refreshing and exhilarating; behold our new El Dorado; our fat beatific Lubberland, where one can enjoy and do nothing! It was the time for such a new Literature; and this Walter Scott was the man for it. The *Lays*, the *Marmions*, the *Ladys* and *Lords* of Lake and Isles, followed in quick succession, with ever-widening profit and praise. How many thousands of guineas were paid-down for each new Lay; how many thousands of copies (fifty and more sometimes) were printed off, then and subsequently; what complimenting, reviewing, renown and apotheosis there was: all is recorded in these Seven Volumes, which will be valuable in literary statistics. It is a history, brilliant, remarkable; the outlines of which are known to all. The reader shall recall it, or conceive it. No blaze in his fancy is likely to mount higher than the reality did.

At this middle period of his life, therefore, Scott, enriched with copyrights, with new official incomes and promotions, rich in money, rich in repute, presents himself as a man in the full career of success. "Health, wealth, and wit to guide them" (as his vernacular Proverb says), all these three are his. The field is open for him, and victory there; his own faculty, his own self, unshackled, victoriously unfolds itself,—the highest blessedness that can befall a man. Wide circle of friends, personal loving admirers; warmth of domestic joys, vouchsafed to all that can true-heartedly nestle down among them; light of radiance and renown given only to a few: who would not call Scott happy? But the happiest circumstance of all is, as we said above, that Scott had in himself a right healthy soul, rendering him little dependent on outward circumstances. Things showed themselves to him not in distortion or borrowed light or gloom, but as they were. Endeavour lay in him and endurance, in due measure; and clear vision of what was to be

endeavoured after. Were one to preach a Sermon on Health, as really were worth doing, Scott ought to be the text. Theories are demonstrably true in the way of logic; and then in the way of practice they prove true or else not true: but here is the grand experiment, Do they turn-out well? What boots it that a man's creed is the wisest, that his system of principles is the superfinest, if, when set to work, the life of him does nothing but jar, and fret itself into *holes*? They are untrue in that, were it in nothing else, these principles of his; openly convicted of untruth;—fit only, shall we say, to be rejected as counterfeits, and flung to the dogs? We say not that; but we do say, that ill-health, of body or of mind, is *defeat*, is battle (in a good or in a bad cause) with bad success; that health alone is victory. Let all men, if they can manage it, contrive to be healthy! He who in what cause soever sinks into pain and disease, let him take thought of it; let him know well that it is not good *he* has arrived at yet, but surely evil,—may, or may not be, on the way towards good.

Scott's healthiness showed itself decisively in all things, and nowhere more decisively than in this: the way in which he took his fame; the estimate he from the first formed of fame. Money will buy money's worth; but the thing men call fame, what is it? A gaudy emblazonry, not good for much,—except, indeed, as it too may turn to money. To Scott it was a profitable pleasing superfluity, no necessary of life. Not necessary, now or ever! Seemingly without much effort, but taught by Nature, and the instinct which instructs the sound heart what is good for it and what is not, he felt that he could always do without this same emblazonry of reputation; that he ought to put no trust in it; but be ready at any time to see it pass away from him, and to hold on his way as before. It is incalculable, as we conjecture, what evil he escaped in this manner; what perversions, irritations, mean agonies without a name, he lived wholly apart from, knew nothing of. Happily before fame arrived, he had reached the mature age at which all this was easier to him. What a strange Nemesis lurks in the felicities of men! In thy mouth it shall be sweet as honey, in thy belly it shall be bitter as gall! Some weakly-organized individual, we will say at the age of five-and-twenty, whose main or whole talent rests on some prurient susceptivity, and nothing under it but shallowness and vacuum, is clutched hold of by the general imagination, is whirled aloft to the giddy height;

and taught to believe the divine-seeming message that he is a great man: such individual seems the luckiest of men: and, alas, is he not the unluckiest? Swallow not the Circe-draught, O weakly-organized individual; it is fell poison; it will dry up the fountains of thy whole existence, and all will grow withered and parched; thou shalt be wretched under the sun!

Is there, for example, a sadder book than that *Life of Byron* by Moore? To omit mere prurient susceptivities that rest on vacuum, look at poor Byron, who really had much substance in him. Sitting there in his self-exile, with a proud heart striving to persuade itself that it despises the entire created Universe; and far off, in foggy Babylon, let any pitifulest whipster draw pen on him, your proud Byron writhes in torture,—as if the pitiful whipster were a magician, or his pen a galvanic wire struck into the Byron's spinal marrow! Lamentable, despicable,—one had rather be a kitten and cry mew! O son of Adam, great or little, according as thou art lovable, those thou livest with will love thee. Those thou livest *not* with, is it of moment that they have the alphabetic letters of thy name engraved on their memory, with some signpost likeness of thee (as like as I to Hercules) appended to them? It is not of moment; in sober truth, not of any moment at all! And yet, behold, there is no soul now whom thou canst love freely,—from *one* soul only art thou always sure of reverence enough; in presence of no soul is it rightly well with thee! How is thy world become desert; and thou, for the sake of a little babblement of tongues, art poor, bankrupt, insolvent not in purse, but in heart and mind! "The Golden Calf of self-love," says Jean Paul, "has grown into a burning Phalaris' Bull, to consume its owner and worshipper." Ambition, the desire of shining and outshining, was the beginning of Sin in this world. The man of letters who founds upon his fame, does he not thereby alone declare himself a follower of Lucifer (named *Satan*, the Enemy), and member of the Satanic school?——

It was in this poetic period that Scott formed his connexion with the Ballantynes; and embarked, though under cover, largely in trade. To those who regard him in the heroic light, and will have *Vates* to signify Prophet as well as Poet, this portion of his biography seems somewhat incongruous. Viewed as it stood in the reality, as he was

and as it was, the enterprise, since it proved so unfortunate, may be called lamentable, but cannot be called unnatural. The practical Scott, looking towards practical issues in all things, could not but find hard cash one of the most practical. If by any means cash could be honestly produced, were it by writing poems, were it by printing them, why not? Great things might be done ultimately; great difficulties were at once got rid of,—manifold higglings of booksellers, and contradictions of sinners hereby fell away. A printing and bookselling speculation was not so alien for a maker of books. Voltaire, who indeed got no copyrights, made much money by the war-commissariat, in his time; we believe, by the victualling branch of it. St. George himself, they say, was a dealer in bacon in Cappadocia. A thrifty man will help himself towards his object by such steps as lead to it. Station in society, solid power over the good things of this world, was Scott's avowed object; towards which the precept of precepts is that of Iago, *Put money in thy purse.*

Here, indeed, it is to be remarked, that perhaps no literary man of any generation has less value than Scott for the immaterial part of his mission in any sense: not only for the fantasy called fame, with the fantastic miseries attendant thereon; but also for the spiritual purport of his work, whether it tended hitherward or thitherward, or had any tendency whatever; and indeed for all purports and results of his working, except such, we may say, as offered themselves to the eye, and could, in one sense or the other, be handled, looked at and buttoned into the breeches-pocket. Somewhat too little of a fantast, this *Vates* of ours! But so it was: in this nineteenth century, our highest literary man, who immeasurably beyond all others commanded the world's ear, had, as it were, no message whatever to deliver to the world; wished not the world to elevate itself, to amend itself, to do this or to do that, except simply pay him for the books he kept writing. Very remarkable; fittest, perhaps, for an age fallen languid, destitute of faith and terrified at scepticism? Or, perhaps, for quite another sort of age, an age all in peaceable triumphant motion? Be this as it may, surely since Shakspeare's time there has been no great speaker so unconscious of an aim in speaking as Walter Scott. Equally unconscious these two utterances; equally the sincere complete products of the minds they came from: and now if they were equally *deep*? Or, if the one was living fire, and the other was futile phosphorescence and

mere resinous firework? It will depend on the relative worth of the minds; for both were equally spontaneous, both equally expressed themselves unencumbered by an ulterior aim. Beyond drawing audiences to the Globe Theatre, Shakspeare contemplated no result in those plays of his. Yet they have had results! Utter with free heart what thy own *dæmon* gives thee: if fire from heaven, it shall be well; if resinous firework, it shall be—as well as it could be, or better than otherwise!

The candid judge will, in general, require that a speaker, in so extremely serious a Universe as this of ours, have something to speak about. In the heart of the speaker there ought to be some kind of gospel-tidings, burning till it be uttered; otherwise it were better for him that he altogether held his peace. A gospel somewhat more decisive than this of Scott's,—except to an age altogether languid, without either scepticism or faith! These things the candid judge will demand of literary men; yet withal will recognize the great worth there is in Scott's honesty if in nothing more, in his being the thing he was with such entire good faith. Here is a something, not a nothing. If no skyborn messenger, heaven looking through his eyes; then neither is it a chimera with his systems, crotchets, cants, fanaticisms, and "last infirmity of noble minds,"—full of misery, unrest and ill-will; but a substantial, peaceable, terrestrial man. Far as the Earth is under the Heaven does Scott stand below the former sort of character; but high as the cheerful flowery Earth is above waste Tartarus does he stand above the latter. Let him live in his own fashion, and do honour to him in that.

It were late in the day to write criticisms on those Metrical Romances: at the same time, we may remark, the great popularity they had seems natural enough. In the first place, there was the indisputable impress of worth, of genuine human force, in them. This, which lies in some degree, or is thought to lie, at the bottom of all popularity, did to an unusual degree disclose itself in these rhymed romances of Scott's. Pictures were actually painted and presented; human emotions conceived and sympathized with. Considering what wretched Della-Cruscan and other vamping-up of old worn-out tatters was the staple article then, it may be granted that Scott's excellence was superior and supreme. When a Hayley was the main singer, a Scott might well be hailed with warm welcome. Consider

whether the *Loves of the Plants*, and even the *Loves of the Triangles*, could be worth the loves and hates of men and women! Scott was as preferable to what he displaced, as the substance is to wearisomely repeated shadow of a substance.

But, in the second place, we may say that the *kind* of worth which Scott manifested was fitted especially for the then temper of men. We have called it an age fallen into spiritual languor, destitute of belief, yet terrified at Scepticism; reduced to live a stinted half-life, under strange new circumstances. Now vigorous whole-life, this was what of all things these delineations offered. The reader was carried back to rough strong times, wherein those maladies of ours had not yet arisen. Brawny fighters, all cased in buff and iron, their hearts too sheathed in oak and triple brass, caprioled their huge war-horses, shook their death-doing spears; and went forth in the most determined manner, nothing doubting. The reader sighed, yet not without a reflex solacement: "O, that I too had lived in those times, had never known these logic-cobwebs, this doubt, this sickliness; and been and felt myself alive among men alive!" Add lastly, that in this new-found poetic world there was no call for effort on the reader's part; what excellence they had, exhibited itself at a glance. It was for the reader, not the El Dorado only, but a beatific land of Cockaigne and Paradise of Donothings! The reader, what the vast majority of readers so long to do, was allowed to lie down at his ease, and be ministered to. What the Turkish bath-keeper is said to aim at with his frictions, and shampooings, and fomentings, more or less effectually, that the patient in total idleness may have the delights of activity,—was here to a considerable extent realized. The languid imagination fell back into its rest; an artist was there who could supply it with high-painted scenes, with sequences of stirring action, and whisper to it, Be at ease, and let thy tepid element be comfortable to thee. "The rude man," says a critic, "requires only to see something going on. The man of more refinement must be made to feel. The man of complete refinement must be made to reflect."

We named the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* the fountain from which flowed this great river of Metrical Romances; but according to some they can be traced to a still higher, obscurer spring; to Goethe's *Götz von Berlichingen with the Iron Hand*; of which, as we have seen,

Scott in his earlier days executed a translation. Dated a good many years ago, the following words in a criticism on Goethe are found written; which probably are still new to most readers of this Review:

"The works just mentioned, *Götz* and *Werter*, though noble specimens of youthful talent, are still not so much distinguished by their intrinsic merits as by their splendid fortune. It would be difficult to name two books which have exercised a deeper influence on the subsequent literature of Europe than these two performances of a young author; his first-fruits, the produce of his twenty-fourth year. *Werter* appeared to seize the hearts of men in all quarters of the world, and to utter for them the word which they had long been waiting to hear. As usually happens too, this same word, once uttered, was soon abundantly repeated; spoken in all dialects, and chanted through all notes of the gamut, till the sound of it had grown a weariness rather than a pleasure. Sceptical sentimentality, view-hunting, love, friendship, suicide and desperation, became the staple of literary ware; and though the epidemic, after a long course of years, subsided in Germany, it reappeared with various modifications in other countries, and everywhere abundant traces of its good and bad effects are still to be discerned. The fortune of *Berlichingen with the Iron Hand*, though less sudden, was by no means less exalted. In his own country, *Götz*, though he now stands solitary and childless, became the parent of an innumerable progeny of chivalry plays, feudal delineations, and poetico-antiquarian performances; which, though long ago deceased, made noise enough in their day and generation: and with ourselves his influence has been perhaps still more remarkable. Sir Walter Scott's first literary enterprise was a translation of *Götz von Berlichingen*: and, if genius could be communicated like instruction, we might call this work of Goethe's the prime cause of *Marmion* and the *Lady of the Lake*, with all that has followed from the same creative hand. Truly, a grain of seed that has lighted in the right soil! For if not firmer and fairer, it has grown to be taller and broader than any other tree; and all the nations of the earth are still yearly gathering of its fruit."

How far *Götz von Berlichingen* actually affected Scott's

literary destination, and whether without it the rhymed romances, and then the prose romances of the Author of Waverley, would not have followed as they did, must remain a very obscure question; obscure, and not important. Of the fact, however, there is no doubt, that these two tendencies, which may be named *Götzism* and *Werterism*, of the former of which Scott was representative with us, have made, and are still in some quarters making the tour of all Europe. In Germany too there was this affectionate half-regretful looking-back into the Past; Germany had its buff-belted watch-tower period in literature, and had even got done with it before Scott began. Then as to *Werterism*, had not we English our Byron and his genius? No form of Werterism in any other country had half the potency; as our Scott carried Chivalry Literature to the ends of the world, so did our Byron Werterism. France, busy with its Revolution and Napoleon, had little leisure at the moment for Götzism or Werterism; but it has had them both since, in a shape of its own: witness the whole "Literature of Desperation" in our own days; the beggarliest form of Werterism yet seen, probably its expiring final form; witness also, at the other extremity of the scale, a noble-gifted Chateaubriand, Götz and Werter both in one.—Curious: how all Europe is but like a set of parishes of the same county; participant of the self-same influences, ever since the Crusades, and earlier;—and these glorious wars of ours are but like parish-brawls, which begin in mutual ignorance, intoxication and boastful speech; which end in broken windows, damage, waste and bloody noses; and which one hopes the general good sense is now in the way towards putting down, in some measure!

But leaving this to be as it can, what it concerned us here to remark, was that British Werterism, in the shape of those Byron Poems, so potent and poignant, produced on the languid appetite of men a mighty effect. This too was a "class of feelings deeply important to modern minds; feelings which arise from *passion incapable of being converted into action*, which belong to an age as indolent, cultivated and unbelieving as our own!" The "languid age without either faith or scepticism" turned towards Byronism with an interest altogether peculiar: here, if no cure for its miserable paralysis and languor, was at least an indignant statement of the misery; an indignant Ernulphus' curse read over it,—which all men felt to be some-

thing. Half-regretful lookings into the Past gave place, in many quarters, to Ernulphus' cursings of the Present. Scott was among the first to perceive that the day of Metrical Chivalry Romances was declining. He had held the sovereignty for some half-score of years, a comparatively long lease of it; and now the time seemed come for dethronement, for abdication: an unpleasant business; which however he held himself ready, as a brave man will, to transact with composure and in silence. After all, Poetry was not his staff of life; Poetry had already yielded him much money; *this* at least it would not take back from him. Busy always with editing, with compiling, with multiplex official commercial business, and solid interests, he beheld the coming change with unmoved eye.

Resignation he was prepared to exhibit in this matter;—and now behold there proved to be no need of resignation. Let the Metrical Romance become a Prose one; shake off its rhyme-fetters, and try a wider sweep! In the spring of 1814 appeared *Waverley*; an event memorable in the annals of British Literature; in the annals of British Bookselling thrice and four times memorable. Byron sang, but Scott narrated; and when the song had sung itself out through all variations onwards to the *Don Juan* one, Scott was still found narrating, and carrying the whole world along with him. All bygone popularity of chivalry-lays was swallowed up in a far greater. What "series" followed out of *Waverley*, and how and with what result, is known to all men; was witnessed and watched with a kind of rapt astonishment by all. Hardly any literary reputation ever rose so high in our Island; no reputation at all ever spread so wide. Walter Scott became Sir Walter Scott, Baronet, of Abbotsford; on whom Fortune seemed to pour her whole cornucopia of wealth, honour and worldly good; the favourite of Princes and of Peasants, and all intermediate men. His "Waverley series," swift-following one on the other apparently without end, was the universal reading; looked for like an annual harvest, by all ranks, in all European countries.

A curious circumstance superadded itself, that the author though known was unknown. From the first most people suspected, and soon after the first, few intelligent persons much doubted, that the Author of *Waverley* was Walter Scott. Yet a certain mystery was still kept up; rather piquant to the public; doubtless very pleasant to the

author, who saw it all ; who probably had not to listen, as other hapless individuals often had, to this or the other long-drawn " clear proof at last," that the author was not Walter Scott, but a certain astonishing Mr. So-and-so ;— one of the standing miseries of human life in that time. But for the privileged Author it was like a king travelling incognito. All men know that he is a high king, chivalrous Gustaf or Kaiser Joseph ; but he mingles in their meetings without cumber of etiquette or lonesome ceremony, as Chevalier du Nord, or Count of Lorraine : he has none of the weariness of royalty, and yet all the praise, and the satisfaction of hearing it with his own ears. In a word, the Waverley Novels circulated and reigned triumphant ; to the general imagination the " Author of *Waverley* " was like some living mythological personage, and ranked among the chief wonders of the world.

How a man lived and demeaned himself in such unwonted circumstances, is worth seeing. We would gladly quote from Scott's correspondence of this period ; but that does not much illustrate the matter. His letters, as above stated, are never without interest, yet also seldom or never very interesting. They are full of cheerfulness, of wit and ingenuity ; but they do not treat of aught intimate ; without impeaching their sincerity, what is called sincerity, one may say they do not, in any case whatever, proceed from the innermost parts of the mind. Conventional forms, due consideration of your own and your correspondent's pretensions and vanities, are at no moment left out of view. The epistolary stream runs on, lucid, free, glad-flowing ; but always, as it were, *parallel* to the real substance of the matter, never coincident with it. One feels it hollowish under foot. Letters they are of a most humane man of the world, even exemplary in that kind ; but with the man of the world always visible in them ;—'s indeed it was little in Scott's way to speak, perhaps even with himself, in any other fashion. We select rather some glimpses of him from Mr. Lockhart's record. The first is of dining with Royalty or Prince-Regentship itself ; an almost official matter :

" On hearing from Mr. Croker (then Secretary to the Admiralty) that Scott was to be in town by the middle of March (1815), the Prince said, ' Let me know when he

comes, and I 'll get-up a snug little dinner that will suit him ; ' and, after he had been presented and graciously received at the *levee*, he was invited to dinner accordingly, through his excellent friend Mr. Adam (now Lord Chief Commissioner of the Jury Court in Scotland), who at that time held a confidential office in the royal household. The Regent had consulted with Mr. Adam, also, as to the composition of the party. ' Let us have,' said he, ' just a few friends of his own, and the more Scotch the better ; ' and both the Commissioner and Mr. Croker assure me that the party was the most interesting and agreeable one in their recollection. It comprised, I believe, the Duke of York—the Duke of Gordon (then Marquess of Huntly)—the Marquess of Hertford (then Lord Yarmouth)—the Earl of Fife—and Scott's early friend, Lord Melville. ' The Prince and Scott,' says Mr. Croker, ' were the two most brilliant story-tellers, in their several ways, that I have ever happened to meet ; they were both aware of their *forte*, and both exerted themselves that evening with delightful effect. On going home, I really could not decide which of them had shone the most. The Regent was enchanted with Scott, as Scott with him ; and on all his subsequent visits to London, he was a frequent guest at the royal table.' The Lord Chief Commissioner remembers that the Prince was particularly delighted with the poet's anecdotes of the old Scotch judges and lawyers, which his Royal Highness sometimes *capped* by ludicrous traits of certain ermine sages of his own acquaintance. Scott told, among others, a story, which he was fond of telling, of his old friend the Lord Justice-Clerk Braxfield ; and the commentary of his Royal Highness on hearing it amused Scott, who often mentioned it afterwards. The anecdote is this : Braxfield, whenever he went on a particular circuit, was in the habit of visiting a gentleman of good fortune in the neighbourhood of one of the assize towns, and staying at least one night, which, being both of them ardent chess-players, they usually concluded with their favourite game. One Spring circuit the battle was not decided at daybreak ; so the Justice-Clerk said, ' Weel, Donald, I must e'en come back this gate, and let the game lie ower for the present : ' and back he came in October, but not to his old friend's hospitable house ; for that gentleman had in the interim been apprehended on a capital charge (of forgery), and his name stood on the

Porteous Roll, or list of those who were about to be tried under his former guest's auspices. The laird was indicted and tried accordingly, and the jury returned a verdict of *guilty*. Braxfield forthwith put on his cocked hat (which answers to the black cap in English), and pronounced the sentence of the law in the usual terms—'To be hanged by the neck until you be dead; and may the Lord have mercy upon your unhappy soul!' Having concluded this awful formula in his most sonorous cadence, Braxfield, dismounting his formidable beaver, gave a familiar nod to his unfortunate acquaintance, and said to him in a sort of chuckling whisper, 'And now, Donald my man, I think I've checkmated you for ance.' The Regent laughed heartily at this specimen of Macqueen's brutal humour; and 'I' faith, Walter,' said he, 'this old bigwig seems to have taken things as coolly as my tyrannical self. Don't you remember Tom Moore's description of me at breakfast—

> 'The table spread with tea and toast,
> Death-warrants and the *Morning Post*'?

"Towards midnight, the Prince called for 'a bumper, with all the honours, to the Author of Waverley;' and looked significantly, as he was charging his own glass, to Scott. Scott seemed somewhat puzzled for a moment, but instantly recovering himself, and filling his glass to the brim, said, 'Your Royal Highness looks as if you thought I had some claim to the honours of this toast. I have no such pretensions; but shall take good care that the real Simon Pure hears of the high compliment that has now been paid him.' He then drank-off his claret; and joined with a stentorian voice in the cheering, which the Prince himself timed. But before the company could resume their seats, his Royal Highness, 'Another of the same, if you please, to the Author of Marmion,—and now, Walter my man, I have checkmated you for *ance*.' The second bumper was followed by cheers still more prolonged: and Scott then rose, and returned thanks in a short address, which struck the Lord Chief Commissioner as 'alike grave and graceful.' This story has been circulated in a very perverted shape." . . . "Before he left town he again dined at Carlton House, when the party was a still smaller one than before, and the merriment if possible still more

free. That nothing might be wanting, the Prince sang several capital songs." *

Or take, at a very great interval in many senses, this glimpse of another dinner, altogether *un*officially and much better described. It is James Ballantyne the printer and publisher's dinner, in St. John Street, Canongate, Edinburgh, on the birth-eve of a Waverley Novel :

" The feast was, to use one of James's own favourite epithets, *gorgeous* ; an aldermanic display of turtle and venison, with the suitable accompaniments of iced punch, potent ale, and generous Madeira. When the cloth was drawn, the burly præses arose, with all he could muster of the port of John Kemble, and spouted with a sonorous voice the formula of Macbeth,

' Fill full !
I drink to the general joy of the whole table ! '

This was followed by ' the King, God bless him ! ' and second came—' Gentlemen, there is another toast which never has been nor shall be omitted in this house of mine : I give you the health of Mr. Walter Scott, with three times three ! ' All honour having been done to this health, and Scott having briefly thanked the company, with some expressions of warm affection to their host, Mrs. Ballantyne retired ;—the bottles passed round twice or thrice in the usual way ; and then James rose once more, every vein on his brow distended ; his eyes solemnly fixed on vacancy, to propose, not as before in his stentorian key, but with ' 'bated breath,' in the sort of whisper by which a stage-conspirator thrills the gallery,—' *Gentlemen, a bumper to the immortal Author of Waverley !* '—The uproar of cheering, in which Scott made a fashion of joining, was succeeded by deep silence ; and then Ballantyne proceeded—

' In his Lord-Burleigh look, serene and serious,
A something of imposing and mysterious '—

to lament the obscurity, in which his illustrious but too modest correspondent still chose to conceal himself from the plaudits of the world ; to thank the company for the manner in which the *nominis umbra* had been received ;

* Vol. iii. pp. 340–343.

and to assure them that the Author of Waverley would, when informed of the circumstance, feel highly delighted—'the proudest hour of his life,' etc. etc. The cool, demure fun of Scott's features during all this mummery was perfect; and Erskine's attempt at a gay *nonchalance* was still more ludicrously meritorious. Aldiborontiphoscophornio, however, bursting as he was, knew too well to allow the new Novel to be made the subject of discussion. Its name was announced, and success to it crowned another cup; but after that, no more of Jedediah. To cut the thread, he rolled out unbidden some one of his many theatrical songs, in a style that would have done no dishonour to almost any orchestra—*The Maid of Lodi*, or perhaps *The Bay of Biscay, O!*—or *The sweet little cherub that sits up aloft*. Other toasts followed, interspersed with ditties from other performers; old George Thomson, the friend of Burns, was ready, for one, with *The Moorland Wedding*, or *Willie brew'd a peck o' maut*;—and so it went on, until Scott and Erskine, with any clerical or very staid personage that had chanced to be admitted, saw fit to withdraw. Then the scene was changed. The claret and olives made way for broiled bones and a mighty blow of punch; and when a few glasses of the hot beverage had restored his powers, James opened *ore rotundo* on the merits of the forthcoming Romance. 'One chapter—one chapter only!' was the cry. After '*Nay, by'r Lady, nay!*' and a few more coy shifts, the proof-sheets were at length produced, and James, with many a prefatory hem, read aloud what he considered as the most striking dialogue they contained.

"The first I heard so read was the interview between Jeanie Deans, the Duke of Argyle and Queen Caroline, in Richmond Park; and, notwithstanding some spice of the pompous tricks to which he was addicted, I must say he did the inimitable scene great justice. At all events, the effect it produced was deep and memorable; and no wonder that the exulting typographer's *one bumper more to Jedediah Cleishbotham* preceded his parting-stave, which was uniformly *The Last Words of Marmion*, executed certainly with no contemptible rivalry of Braham." *

Over at Abbotsford things wear a still more prosperous aspect. Scott is building there, by the pleasant banks of

* Vol. iv. pp. 166–168.

the Tweed ; he has bought and is buying land there ; fast as the new gold comes in for a new Waverley Novel, or even faster, it changes itself into moory acres, into stone, and hewn or planted wood :

"About the middle of February" (1820), says Mr. Lockhart, "it having been ere that time arranged that I should marry his eldest daughter in the course of the spring,—I accompanied him and part of his family on one of those flying visits to Abbotsford, with which he often indulged himself on a Saturday during term. Upon such occasions, Scott appeared at the usual hour in court, but wearing, instead of the official suit of black, his country morning-dress, green jacket and so forth, under the clerk's gown."—"At noon, when the Court broke up, Peter Mathieson was sure to be in attendance in the Parliament Close ; and, five minutes after, the gown had been tossed off ; and Scott, rubbing his hands for glee, was under weigh for Tweedside. As we proceeded," etc.

"Next morning there appeared at breakfast John Ballantyne, who had at this time a shooting or hunting-box a few miles off, in the vale of the Leader, and with him Mr. Constable, his guest ; and it being a fine clear day, as soon as Scott had read the church-service and one of Jeremy Taylor's sermons, we all sallied out before noon on a perambulation of his upland territories ; Maida (the hound) and the rest of the favourites accompanying our march. At starting we were joined by the constant henchman, Tom Purdie,—and I may save myself the trouble of any attempt to describe his appearance, for his master has given us an inimitably true one in introducing a certain personage of his Redgauntlet :—'He was, perhaps, sixty years old ; yet his brow was not much furrowed, and his jet-black hair was only grizzled, not whitened, by the advance of age. All his motions spoke strength unabated ; and, though rather undersized, he had very broad shoulders, was square-made, thin-flanked, and apparently combined in his frame muscular strength and activity ; the last somewhat impaired, perhaps, by years, but the first remaining in full vigour. A hard and harsh countenance ; eyes far sunk under projecting eyebrows, which were grizzled like his hair ; a wide mouth, furnished from ear to ear with a range of unimpaired teeth of uncommon whiteness, and a size and breadth which might have

become the jaws of an ogre, completed this delightful portrait.' Equip this figure in Scott's cast-off green jacket, white hat and drab trousers; and imagine that years of kind treatment, comfort and the honest consequence of a confidential *grieve* * had softened away much of the hardness and harshness originally impressed on the visage by anxious penury, and the sinister habits of a *black-fisher*;—and the Tom Purdie of 1820 stands before us.

"We were all delighted to see how completely Scott had recovered his bodily vigour, and none more so than Constable, who, as he puffed and panted after him, up one ravine and down another, often stopped to wipe his forehead, and remarked, that 'it was not every author who should lead him such a dance.' But Purdie's face shone with rapture as he observed how severely the swag-bellied bookseller's activity was tasked. Scott exclaimed exultingly, though, perhaps, for the tenth time, 'This will be a glorious spring for our trees, Tom!'—'You may say that, Sheriff,' quoth Tom,—and then lingering a moment for Constable—'My certy,' he added, scratching his head, 'and I think it will be a grand season for *our buiks* too.' But indeed Tom always talked of *our buiks*, as if they had been as regular products of the soil as *our aits* and *our birks*. Having threaded first the Hexilcleugh and then the Rhymer's Glen, we arrived at Huntly Burn, where the hospitality of the kind *Weird Sisters*, as Scott called the Miss Fergusons, reanimated our exhausted bibliopoles, and gave them courage to extend their walk a little farther down the same famous brook. Here there was a small cottage in a very sequestered situation" (named Chiefswood), "by making some little additions to which Scott thought it might be converted into a suitable summer residence for his daughter and future son-in-law." . . . "As we walked homeward, Scott being a little fatigued, laid his left hand on Tom's shoulder, and leaned heavily for support, chatting to his 'Sunday pony,' as he called the affectionate fellow, just as freely as with the rest of the party; and Tom put-in his word shrewdly and manfully, and grinned and grunted whenever the joke chanced to be within his apprehension. It was easy to see that his heart swelled within him from the moment the Sheriff got his collar in his gripe." †

* Overseer: German, *graf*. † Vol. iv. pp. 349–353.

That Abbotsford became infested to a great degree with tourists, wonder-hunters, and all that fatal species of people, may be supposed. Solitary Ettrick saw itself populous: all paths were beaten with the feet and hoofs of an endless miscellany of pilgrims. As many as "sixteen parties" have arrived at Abbotsford in one day; male and female; peers, Socinian preachers, whatsoever was distinguished, whatsoever had love of distinction in it! Mr. Lockhart thinks there was no literary shrine ever so bepilgrimed, except Ferney in Voltaire's time, who, however, was not half so accessible. A fatal species! These are what Schiller calls "the flesh-flies;" buzzing swarms of blue-bottles, who never fail where any taint of human glory or other corruptibility is in the wind. So has Nature decreed. Scott's *healthiness*, bodily and mental, his massive solidity of character, nowhere showed itself more decisively than in his manner of encountering this part of his fate. That his blue-bottles were blue, and of the usual tone and quality may be judged. Hear Captain Basil Hall (in a very compressed state):

"We arrived in good time, and found several other guests at dinner. The public rooms are lighted with oil-gas, in a style of extraordinary splendour. The" etc.—"Had I a hundred pens, each of which at the same time should separately write down an anecdote, I could not hope to record one-half of those which our host, to use Spenser's expression, 'welled out alway.'"—"Entertained us all the way with an endless string of anecdotes;"—"came like a stream of poetry from his lips;"—"path muddy and scarcely passable, yet I do not remember ever to have seen any place so interesting as the skill of this mighty magician had rendered this narrow ravine."—"Impossible to touch on any theme, but straightway he had an anecdote to fit it."—'Thus we strolled along, borne, as it were, on the stream of song and story.'—"In the evening we had a great feast indeed. Sir Walter asked us if we had ever read Christabel."—'Interspersed with these various readings were some hundreds of stories, some quaint, some pathetical."—"At breakfast to-day we had, as usual, some 150 stories—God knows how they came in."—"In any man so gifted—so qualified to take the loftiest, proudest line at the head of the literature, the taste, the imagination of the whole world!"—"For instance, he never sits at any particular place at table, but takes," etc. etc.*

* Vol. v. pp. 375–402.

Among such worshippers, arriving in "sixteen parties a-day," an ordinary man might have grown buoyant; have felt the god, begun to nod, and seemed to shake the spheres. A slightly splenetic man, possessed of Scott's sense, would have swept his premises clear of them: Let no bluebottle approach here, to disturb a man in his work,—under pain of sugared *squash* (called quassia) and king's yellow! The good Sir Walter, like a quiet brave man, did neither. He let the matter take its course; enjoyed what was enjoyable in it; endured what could not well be helped; persisted meanwhile in writing his daily portion of romance-*copy*, in preserving his composure of heart;—in a word, accommodated himself to this loud-buzzing environment, and made it serve him, as he would have done (perhaps with more ease) to a silent, poor and solitary one. No doubt it affected him too, and in the lamentablest way fevered his internal life, though he kept it well down; but it affected him *less* than it would have done almost any other man. For his guests were not all of the bluebottle sort; far from that. Mr. Lockhart shall furnish us with the brightest aspect a British Ferney ever yielded, or is like to yield: and therewith we will quit Abbotsford and the dominant and culminant period of Scott's life:

"It was a clear, bright September morning, with a sharpness in the air that doubled the animating influence of the sunshine, and all was in readiness for a grand coursing-match on Newark Hill. The only guest who had chalked-out other sport for himself was the staunchest of anglers, Mr. Rose; but he too was there on his *shelty*, armed with his salmon-rod and landing-net, and attended by his Hinves, and Charlie Purdie, a brother of Tom, in those days the most celebrated fisherman of the district. This little group of Waltonians, bound for Lord Somerville's preserve, remained lounging about, to witness the start of the main cavalcade. Sir Walter, mounted on Sibyl, was marshalling the order of procession with a huge hunting-whip; and among a dozen frolicsome youths and maidens, who seemed disposed to laugh at all discipline, appeared, each on horseback, each as eager as the youngest sportsman in the troop, Sir Humphry Davy, Dr. Wollaston, and the patriarch of Scottish belles-lettres, Henry Mackenzie. The Man of Feeling, however, was persuaded with some difficulty to resign his steed for the present to his faithful negro follower, and to join Lady

Scott in the sociable, until we should reach the ground of our *battue*. Laidlaw, on a strong-tailed wiry Highlander, yclept *Hoddin Grey*, which carried him nimbly and stoutly, although his feet almost touched the ground as he sat, was the adjutant. But the most picturesque figure was the illustrious inventor of the safety-lamp. He had come for his favourite sport of angling, and had been practising it successfully with Rose, his travelling companion, for two or three days preceding this; but he had not prepared for coursing fields, or had left Charlie Purdie's troop for Sir Walter's on a sudden thought, and his fisherman's costume —a brown hat with flexible brim, surrounded with line upon line of catgut, and innumerable fly-hooks—jack-boots worthy of a Dutch smuggler, and a fustian surtout dabbled with the blood of salmon, made a fine contrast with the smart jackets, white-cord breeches, and well-polished jockey-boots of the less distinguished cavaliers about him. Dr. Wollaston was in black; and with his noble serene dignity of countenance might have passed for a sporting archbishop. Mr. Mackenzie, at this time in the 76th year of his age, with a white hat turned up with green, green spectacles, green jacket, and long brown leathern gaiters buttoned upon his nether anatomy, wore a dog-whistle round his neck, and had, all over, the air of as resolute a devotee as the gay captain of Huntly Burn. Tom Purdie and his subalterns had preceded us by a few hours with all the greyhounds that could be collected at Abbotsford, Darnick, and Melrose; but the giant Maida had remained as his master's orderly, and now gambolled about Sibyl Grey, barking for mere joy like a spaniel puppy.

"The order of march had been all settled, and the sociable was just getting under weigh, when *the Lady Anne* broke from the line, screaming with laughter, and exclaimed, 'Papa, papa, I knew you could never think of going without your pet!' Scott looked round, and I rather think there was a blush as well as a smile upon his face, when he perceived a little black pig frisking about his pony, and evidently a self-elected addition to the party of the day. He tried to look stern, and cracked his whip at the creature, but was in a moment obliged to join in the general cheers. Poor piggy soon found a strap round its neck, and was dragged into the background;—Scott, watching the retreat, repeated with mock pathos the first verse of an old pastoral song—

'What will I do gin my hoggie die?
My joy, my pride, my hoggie!
My only beast, I had na mae,
And wow! but I was vogie!'

—the cheers were redoubled—and the squadron moved on.

"This pig had taken, nobody could tell how, a most sentimental attachment to Scott, and was constantly urging its pretensions to be admitted a regular member of his *tail* along with the greyhounds and terriers: but, indeed, I remember him suffering another summer under the same sort of pertinacity on the part of an affectionate hen. I leave the explanation for philosophers; but such were the facts. I have too much respect for the vulgarly calumniated donkey, to name him in the same category of pets with the pig and the hen; but a year or two after this time, my wife used to drive a couple of these animals in a little garden-chair, and whenever her father appeared at the door of our cottage, we were sure to see Hannah More and Lady Morgan (as Anne Scott had wickedly christened them) trotting from their pasture, to lay their noses over the paling, and, as Washington Irving says of the old white-haired hedger with the Parisian snuff-box, 'to have a pleasant crack wi' the laird.' *

* Vol. v. pp. 7–10.

On this subject let us report an anecdote furnished by a correspondent of our own, whose accuracy we can depend on: "I myself was acquainted with a little Blenheim cocker, one of the smallest, beautifulest and wisest of lap-dogs or dogs, which, though Sir Walter knew it not, was very singular in its behaviour towards him. *Shandy*, so hight this remarkable cocker, was extremely shy of strangers: promenading on Prince's Street, which in fine weather used to be crowded in those days, he seemed to live in perpetual fear of being stolen; if any one but looked at him admiringly, he would draw-back with angry timidity, and crouch towards his own lady-mistress. One day a tall, irregular, busy-looking man came halting by; the little dog ran towards him, began fawning, frisking, licking at his feet: it was Sir Walter Scott! Had Shandy been the most extensive reader of Reviews, he could not have done better. Every time he saw Sir Walter afterwards, which was some three or four times in the course of visiting Edinburgh, he repeated his demonstrations, ran leaping, frisking, licking the author of Waverley's feet. The good Sir Walter endured it with good humour; looked down at the little wise face, at the silky shag-coat of snow-white and chestnut-brown; smiled, and avoided hitting him as they went on,—till a new division of streets or some other obstacle put an end to the interview. In fact he was a strange little fellow, this Shandy. He has been known to sit for hours looking out at the summer moon, with the saddest, wistfulest expression of countenance; altogether like a Wertherean Poet. He would have been a poet, I daresay, if he could

"There," at Chiefswood, "my wife and I spent this summer and autumn of 1821; the first of several seasons which will ever dwell on my memory as the happiest of my life. We were near enough Abbotsford to partake as often as we liked of its brilliant and constantly varying society; yet could do so without being exposed to the worry and exhaustion of spirit which the daily reception of new-comers entailed upon all the family, except Sir Walter himself. But, in truth, even he was not always proof against the annoyances connected with such a style of open housekeeping. Even his temper sank sometimes under the solemn applauses of learned dullness, the vapid raptures of painted and periwigged dowagers, the horse-leech avidity with which underbred foreigners urged their questions, and the pompous simpers of condescending magnates. When sore beset at home in this way, he would every now and then discover that he had some very particular business to attend to on an outlying part of his estate; and, craving the indulgence of his guests over-night, appear at the cabin in the glen before its inhabitants were astir in the morning. The clatter of Sibyl Grey's hoofs, the yelping of Mustard and Spice, and his own joyous shout of *réveillée* under our windows, were the signal that he had burst his toils, and meant for that day to 'take his ease in his inn.' On descending, he was to be found seated with all his dogs and ours about him, under a

have found a *publisher*. But his moral tact was the most amazing. Without reason shown, without word spoken or act done, he took his likings and dislikings; unalterable; really almost unerring. His chief aversion, I should say, was to the genus *quack*, above all to the genus *acrid-quack*; these, though never so clear-starched, bland-smiling and beneficent, he absolutely would have no trade with. Their very sugar-cake was unavailing. He said with emphasis, as clearly as barking could say it: 'Acrid-quack, avaunt!' Would to Heaven many a prime-minister, and high person in authority, had such an invaluable talent! On the whole, there is more in this universe than our philosophy has dreamt of. A dog's instinct is a voice of Nature too; and farther, *it* has never babbled itself away in idle jargon and hypothesis, but always adhered to the practical, and grown in silence by continual communion with fact. We do the animals injustice. Their body resembles our body, Buffon says; with its four limbs, with its spinal marrow, main organs in the head and so forth: but have they not a kind of soul, equally the rude draught and imperfect imitation of ours? It is a strange, an almost solemn and pathetic thing to see an intelligence imprisoned in that dumb rude form; struggling to express itself out of that;—even as we do out of our imprisonment; and succeed very imperfectly!"

spreading ash that overshadowed half the bank between the cottage and the brook, pointing the edge of his woodman's-axe, and listening to Tom Purdie's lecture touching the plantation that most needed thinning. After breakfast he would take possession of a dressing-room upstairs, and write a chapter of *The Pirate*; and then, having made-up and dispatched his packet for Mr. Ballantyne, away to join Purdie wherever the foresters were at work—and sometimes to labour among them as strenuously as John Swanston—until it was time either to rejoin his own party at Abbotsford, or the quiet circle of the cottage. When his guests were few and friendly, he often made them come over and meet him at Chiefswood in a body towards evening; and surely he never appeared to more amiable advantage than when helping his young people with their little arrangements upon such occasions. He was ready with all sorts of devices to supply the wants of a narrow establishment; he used to delight particularly in sinking the wine in a well under the *brae* ere he went out, and hauling up the basket just before dinner was announced,—this primitive device being, he said, what he had always practised when a young housekeeper, and in his opinion far superior in its results to any application of ice: and in the same spirit, whenever the weather was sufficiently genial, he voted for dining out of doors altogether, which at once got rid of the inconvenience of very small rooms, and made it natural and easy for the gentlemen to help the ladies, so that the paucity of servants went for nothing." *

Surely all this is very beautiful; like a picture of Boccaccio's: the ideal of a country life in our time. Why could it not last? Income was not wanting: Scott's official permanent income was amply adequate to meet the expense of all that was valuable in it; nay, of all that was not harassing, senseless and despicable. Scott had some £2,000 a-year without writing books at all. Why should he manufacture and not create, to make more money; and rear mass on mass for a dwelling to himself, till the pile toppled, sank crashing, and buried him in its ruins, when he had a safe pleasant dwelling ready of its own accord? Alas, Scott, with all his health, was *infected*; sick of the fearfulest malady, that of Ambition! To such length had the King's

* Vol. v. pp. 123, 124.

baronetcy, the world's favour and "sixteen parties a-day," brought it with him. So the inane racket must be kept up, and rise ever higher. So masons labour, ditchers delve; and there is endless, altogether deplorable correspondence about marble-slabs for tables, wainscoting of rooms, curtains and the trimmings of curtains, orange-coloured or fawn-coloured: Walter Scott, one of the gifted of the world, whom his admirers call the most gifted, must kill himself that he may be a country gentleman, the founder of a race of Scottish lairds.

It is one of the strangest, most tragical histories ever enacted under this sun. So poor a passion can lead so strong a man into such mad extremes. Surely, were not a man a fool always, one might say there was something eminently distracted in this, *end* as it would, of a Walter Scott, writing daily with the ardour of a steam-engine, that he might make £15,000 a-year, and buy upholstery with it. To cover the walls of a stone house in Selkirkshire with nicknacks, ancient armour and genealogical shields, what can we name it but a being bit with delirium of a kind? That tract after tract of moorland in the shire of Selkirk should be joined together on parchment and by ring-fence, and named after one's name, why, it is a shabby small-type edition of your vulgar Napoleons, Alexanders, and conquering heroes, not counted venerable by any teacher of men!—

> "The whole world was not half so wide
> To Alexander when he cried
> Because he had but one to subdue,
> As was a narrow paltry tub to
> Diogenes; who ne'er was said,
> For aught that ever I could read,
> To whine, put finger i' the eye and sob,
> Because he had ne'er another tub."

Not he! And if, "looked at from the Moon, which itself is far from Infinitude," Napoleon's dominions were as small as mine, *what*, by any chance of possibility, could Abbotsford landed-property ever have become? As the Arabs say, there is a black speck, were it no bigger than a bean's eye, in every soul; which, once set it a-working, will overcloud the whole man into darkness and quasi-madness, and hurry him balefully into Night!

With respect to the literary character of these Waverley Novels, so extraordinary in their commercial character,

there remains, after so much reviewing, good and bad, little that it were profitable at present to say. The great fact about them is, that they were faster written and better paid for than any other books in the world. It must be granted, moreover, that they have a worth far surpassing what is usual in such cases; nay, that if Literature had no task but that of harmlessly amusing indolent languid men, here was the very perfection of Literature; that a man, here more emphatically than ever elsewhere, might fling himself back, exclaiming, "Be mine to lie on this sofa, and read everlasting Novels of Walter Scott!" The composition, slight as it often is, usually hangs together in some measure, and *is* a composition. There is a free flow of narrative, of incident and sentiment; an easy masterlike coherence throughout, as if it were the free dash of a master's hand, "round as the O of Giotto." * It is the perfection of extemporaneous writing. Farthermore, surely he were a blind critic who did not recognize here a certain genial sunshiny freshness and picturesqueness; paintings both of scenery and figures, very graceful, brilliant, occasionally full of grace and glowing brightness blended in the softest composure; in fact, a deep sincere love of the beautiful in Nature and Man, and the readiest faculty of expressing this by imagination and by word. No fresher paintings of Nature can be found than Scott's; hardly anywhere a wider sympathy with man. From Davie Deans up to Richard Cœur-de-Lion; from Meg Merrilies to Die Vernon and Queen Elizabeth! It is the utterance of a man of open soul; of a brave, large, free-seeing man, who has a true brotherhood with all men. In joyous picturesqueness and fellow-feeling, freedom of eye and heart; or to say it in a word, in general *healthiness* of mind, these Novels prove Scott to have been amongst the foremost writers.

* "Venne a Firenze" (il cortigiano del Papa), "e andato una mattina in bottega di Giotto, che lavorava, gli chiese un poco di disegno per mandarlo a sua Santità. Giotto, che garbatissimo era, prese un foglio, ed in quello con un pennello tinto di rosso, fermato il braccio al fianco per farne compasso, e girato la mano fece un tondo sì pari di sesto e di profilo, che fu a vederlo una maraviglia. Ciò fatto ghignando disse al cortigiano, Eccovi il disegno." . . . "Onde il Papa, e molti cortigiani intendenti conobbero perciò, quanto Giotto avanzasse d' eccelenza tutti gli altri pittori del suo tempo. Divolgatasi poi questa cosa, ne nacque il proverbio, che ancora è in uso dirsi a gli uomini di grossa pasta: *Tu sei più tondo che l' O di Giotto.*"—Vasari, *Vite* (Roma, 1759), i. 46.

Neither in the higher and highest excellence, of drawing character, is he at any time altogether deficient ; though at no time can we call him, in the best sense, successful. His Baillie Jarvies, Dinmonts, Dalgettys (for their name is legion), do look and talk like what they give themselves out for ; they are, if not *created* and made poetically alive, yet deceptively *enacted* as a good player might do them. What more is wanted, then ? For the reader lying on a sofa, nothing more ; yet for another sort of reader, much. It were a long chapter to unfold the difference in drawing a character between a Scott, and a Shakspeare, a Goethe. Yet it is a difference literally immense ; they are of different species ; the value of the one is not to be counted in the coin of the other. We might say in a short word, which means a long matter, that your Shakspeare fashions his characters from the heart outwards ; your Scott fashions them from the skin inwards, never getting near the heart of them ! The one set become living men and women ; the other amount to little more than mechanical cases, deceptively painted automatons. Compare Fenella with Goethe's Mignon, which, it was once said, Scott had " done Goethe the honour " to borrow. He has borrowed what he could of Mignon. The small stature, the climbing talent, the trickiness, the *mechanical case*, as we say, he has borrowed ; but the soul of Mignon is left behind. Fenella is an unfavourable specimen for Scott ; but it illustrates, in the aggravated state, what is traceable in all the characters he drew.

To the same purport indeed we are to say that these famed books are altogether addressed to the every-day mind ; that for any other mind there is next to no nourishment in them. Opinions, emotions, principles, doubts, beliefs, beyond what the intelligent country gentleman can carry along with him, are not to be found. It is orderly, customary, it is prudent, decent ; nothing more. One would say, it lay not in Scott to give much more ; getting out of the ordinary range, and attempting the heroic, which is but seldom the case, he falls almost at once into the rose-pink sentimental,—descries the Minerva Press from afar, and hastily quits that course ; for none better than he knew it to lead nowhither. On the whole, contrasting *Waverley*, which was carefully written, with most of its followers, which were written extempore, one may regret the extempore method. Something very perfect in its kind might have come from Scott ; nor was it a low kind : nay, who knows how high, with studious self-

concentration, he might have gone ; what wealth Nature had implanted in him, which his circumstances, most unkind while seeming to be kindest, had never impelled him to unfold ?

But after all, in the loudest blaring and trumpeting of popularity, it is ever to be held in mind, as a truth remaining true forever, that Literature *has* other aims than that of harmlessly amusing indolent languid men : or if Literature have them not, then Literature is a very poor affair ; and something else must have them, and must accomplish them, with thanks or without thanks ; the thankful or thankless world were not long a world otherwise ! Under this head there is little to be sought or found in the Waverley Novels. Not profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for edification, for building up or elevating, in any shape ! The sick heart will find no healing here, the darkly-struggling heart no guidance : the Heroic that is in all men no divine awakening voice. We say, therefore, that they do not found themselves on deep interests, but on comparatively trivial ones ; not on the perennial, perhaps not even on the lasting. In fact, much of the interest of these Novels results from what may be called contrasts of costume. The phraseology, fashion of arms, of dress and life, belonging to one age, is brought suddenly with singular vividness before the eyes of another. A great effect this ; yet by the very nature of it, an altogether temporary one. Consider, brethren, shall not we too one day be antiques, and grow to have as quaint a costume as the rest ? The stuffed Dandy, only give him *time*, will become one of the wonderfulest mummies. In antiquarian museums, only two centuries hence, the steeple-hat will hang on the next peg to Franks and Company's patent, antiquarians deciding which is uglier : and the Stulz swallow-tail, one may hope, will seem as incredible as any garment that ever made ridiculous the respectable back of man. Not by slashed breeches, steeple-hats, buff-belts, or antiquated speech, can romance-heroes continue to interest us ; but simply and solely, in the long-run, by being men. Buff-belts and all manner of jerkins and costumes are transitory ; man alone is perennial. He that has gone deeper into this than other men will be remembered longer than they ; he that has not, not. Tried under this category, Scott, with his clear practical insight, joyous temper, and other sound faculties, is not to be accounted little,—among the ordinary circulating-library heroes he might well pass for

a demi-god. Not little; yet neither is he great; there were greater, more than one or two, in his own age: among the great of all ages, one sees no likelihood of a place for him.

What, then, is the result of these Waverley Romances? Are they to amuse one generation only? One or more! As many generations as they can; but not all generations: ah no, when our swallow-tail has become fantastic as trunk-hose, they will cease to amuse!—Meanwhile, as we can discern, their results have been several-fold. First of all, and certainly not least of all, have they not perhaps had this result: that a considerable portion of mankind has hereby been sated with mere amusement, and set on seeking something better? Amusement in the way of reading can go no farther, can do nothing better, by the power of man; and men ask, Is this what it can do? Scott, we reckon, carried several things to their ultimatum and crisis, so that change became inevitable: a great service, though an indirect one.

Secondly, however, we may say, these Historical Novels have taught all men this truth, which looks like a truism, and yet was as good as unknown to writers of history and others, till so taught: that the bygone ages of the world were actually filled by living men, not by protocols, state-papers, controversies and abstractions of men. Not abstractions were they, not diagrams and theorems; but men, in buff or other coats and breeches, with colour in their cheeks, with passions in their stomach, and the idioms, features and vitalities of very men. It is a little word this; inclusive of great meaning! History will henceforth have to take thought of it. Her faint hearsays of "philosophy teaching by experience" will have to exchange themselves everywhere for direct inspection and embodiment: this, and this only, will be counted experience; and till once experience have got in, philosophy will reconcile herself to wait at the door. It is a great service, fertile in consequences, this that Scott has done; a great truth laid open by him;—correspondent indeed to the substantial nature of the man; to his solidity and veracity even of imagination, which, with all his lively discursiveness, was the characteristic of him.

A word here as to the extempore style of writing, which is getting much celebrated in these days. Scott seems to have been a high proficient in it. His rapidity was extreme; and the matter produced was excellent, considering that: the circumstances under which some of his Novels, when he could not himself write, were dictated, are justly

considered wonderful. It is a valuable faculty this of ready-writing ; nay farther, for Scott's purpose it was clearly the only good mode. By much labour he could not have added one guinea to his copyright ; nor could the reader on the sofa have lain a whit more at ease. It was in all ways necessary that these works should be produced rapidly ; and, round or not, be thrown off like Giotto's O. But indeed, in all things, writing or other, which a man engages in, there is the indispensablest beauty in knowing *how to get done*. A man frets himself to no purpose ; he has not the sleight of the trade ; he is not a craftsman, but an unfortunate borer and bungler, if he know not when to have done. Perfection is unattainable : no carpenter ever made a mathematically accurate right-angle in the world ; yet all carpenters know when it is right enough, and do not botch it, and lose their wages, by making it too right. Too much painstaking speaks disease in one's mind, as well as too little. The adroit sound-minded man will endeavour to spend on each business approximately what of pains it deserves ; and with a conscience void of remorse will dismiss it then. All this in favour of easy-writing shall be granted, and, if need were, enforced and inculcated.

And yet, on the other hand, it shall not less but more strenuously be inculcated, that in the way of writing, no great thing was ever, or will ever be done with ease, but with difficulty ! Let ready-writers with any faculty in them lay this to heart. Is it with ease, or not with ease, that a man shall *do his best*, in any shape ; above all, in this shape justly named of " soul's travail," working in the deep places of thought, embodying the True out of the Obscure and Possible, environed on all sides with the uncreated False ? Not so, now or at any time. The experience of all men belies it ; the nature of things contradicts it. Virgil and Tacitus, were they ready-writers ? The whole *Prophecies of Isaiah* are not equal in extent to this cobweb of a Review Article. Shakspeare, we may fancy, wrote with rapidity ; but not till he had thought with intensity : long and sore had this man thought, as the seeing eye may discern well, and had dwelt and wrestled amid dark pains and throes,—though his great soul is silent about all that. It was for him to write rapidly at fit intervals, being ready to do it. And herein truly lies the secret of the matter : such swiftness of mere writing, after due energy of preparation, is doubtless the right method ; the hot furnace having long worked and

simmered, let the pure gold flow out at one gush. It was Shakspeare's plan ; no easy-writer he, or he had never been a Shakspeare. Neither was Milton one of the mob of gentlemen that write with ease ; he did not attain Shakspeare's faculty, one perceives, of even writing fast *after* long preparation, but struggled while he wrote. Goethe also tells us he " had nothing sent him in his sleep ; " no page of his but he knew well how it came there. It is reckoned to be the best prose, accordingly, that has been written by any modern. Schiller, as an unfortunate and unhealthy man, " *könnte nie fertig werden*, never could get done ; " the noble genius of him struggled not wisely but too well, and wore his life itself heroically out. Or did Petrarch write easily ? Dante sees himself " growing lean " over his *Divine Comedy* ; in stern solitary death-wrestle with it, to prevail over it, and do it, if his uttermost faculty may : hence, too, it is done and prevailed over, and the fiery life of it endures forevermore among men.

No : creation, one would think, cannot be easy ; your Jove has severe pains, and fire-flames, in the head out of which an armed Pallas is struggling ! As for manufacture, that is a different matter, and may become easy or not easy, according as it is taken up. Yet of manufacture too, the general truth is that, given the manufacturer, it will be worthy in direct proportion to the pains bestowed upon it ; and worthless always, or nearly so, with no pains. Cease, therefore, O ready-writer, to brag openly of thy rapidity and facility ; to thee (if thou be in the manufacturing line) it is a benefit, an increase of wages ; but to me it is sheer loss, worsening of my pennyworth : why wilt thou brag of it to me ? Write easily, by steam if thou canst contrive it, and canst sell it ; but hide it like virtue ! " Easy writing," said Sheridan, " is sometimes d—d hard reading." Sometimes ; and always it is sure to be rather useless reading, which indeed (to a creature of few years and much work) may be reckoned the hardest of all.

Scott's productive facility amazed everybody ; and set Captain Hall, for one, upon a very strange method of accounting for it without miracle ;—for which see his Journal, above quoted from. The Captain, on counting line for line, found that he himself had written in that Journal of his almost as much as Scott, at odd hours in a given number of days ; " and as for the invention," says he, " it is known that this costs Scott nothing, but comes to him of its own accord." Con-

venient indeed !—But for us too Scott's rapidity is great, is a proof and consequence of the solid health of the man, bodily and spiritual ; great, but unmiraculous ; not greater than that of many others besides Captain Hall. Admire it, yet with measure. For observe always, there are two conditions in work : let me fix the quality, and *you* shall fix the quantity ! Any man may get through work rapidly who easily satisfies himself about it. Print the *talk* of any man, there will be a thick octavo volume daily ; make his writing three times as good as his talk, there will be the third part of a volume daily, which still is good work. To write with never such rapidity in a passable manner is indicative not of a man's genius, but of his habits ; it will prove his soundness of nervous system, his practicality of mind, and in fine, that he has the knack of his trade. In the most flattering view, rapidity will betoken health of mind : much also, perhaps most of all, will depend on health of body. Doubt it not, a faculty of easy-writing is attainable by man ! The human genius, once fairly set in this direction, will carry it far. William Cobbett, one of the healthiest of men, was a greater improviser even than Walter Scott : his writing, considered as to quality and quantity, of Rural Rides, Registers, Grammars, Sermons, Peter Porcupines, Histories of Reformation, ever-fresh denouncements of Potatoes and Paper-money, seems to us still more wonderful. Pierre Bayle wrote enormous folios, one sees not on what motive-principle : he flowed on forever, a mighty tide of ditch-water ; and even died flowing, with the pen in his hand. But indeed the most unaccountable ready-writer of all is, probably, the common Editor of a Daily Newspaper. Consider his leading articles ; what they treat of, how passably they are done. Straw that has been thrashed a hundred times without wheat ; ephemeral sound of a sound ; such portent of the hour as all men have seen a hundred times turn out inane : how a man, with merely human faculty, buckles himself nightly with new vigour and interest to this thrashed straw, nightly thrashes it anew, nightly gets-up new thunder about it ; and so goes on thrashing and thundering for a considerable series of years ; this is a fact remaining still to be accounted for, in human physiology. The vitality of man is great.

Or shall we say, Scott, among the many things he carried towards their ultimatum and crisis, carried this of ready-writing too, that so all men might better see what was in it ? It is a valuable consummation. Not without results ;

—results, at some of which Scott as a Tory politician would have greatly shuddered. For if once Printing have grown to be as Talk, then DEMOCRACY (if we look into the roots of things) is not a bugbear and probability, but a certainty, and event as good as come! "Inevitable seems it me." But leaving this, sure enough the triumph of ready-writing appears to be even now; everywhere the ready-writer is found bragging strangely of his readiness. In a late translated *Don Carlos*, one of the most indifferent translations ever done with any sign of ability, a hitherto unknown individual is found assuring his reader, "The reader will possibly think it an excuse, when I assure him that the whole piece was completed within the space of ten weeks, that is to say, between the sixth of January and the eighteenth of March of this year (inclusive of a fortnight's interruption from over-exertion); that I often translated twenty pages a-day, and that the fifth act was the work of five days." * O hitherto unknown individual, what is it to me what time it was the work of, whether five days or five decades of years? The only question is, How well hast thou done it?

So, however, it stands: the genius of Extempore irresistibly lording it, advancing on us like ocean-tides, like Noah's deluges—of ditch-water! The prospect seems one of the lamentablest. To have all Literature swum away from us in watery Extempore, and a spiritual time of Noah supervene? That surely is an awful reflection; worthy of dyspeptic Matthew Bramble in a London fog! Be of comfort, O splenetic Matthew; it is not Literature they are swimming away; it is only Book-publishing and Bookselling. Was there not a Literature *before* Printing or Faust of Mentz, and yet men wrote extempore? Nay, before Writing or Cadmus of Thebes, and yet men spoke extempore? Literature is the Thought of thinking Souls; this, by the blessing of God, can in no generation be swum away, but remains with us to the end.

Scott's career, of writing impromptu novels to buy farms with, was not of a kind to terminate voluntarily, but to accelerate itself more and more; and one sees not to what wise goal it could, in any case, have led him. Bookseller Constable's bankruptcy was not the ruin of Scott; his ruin

* *Don Carlos*, a Dramatic Poem, from the German of Schiller. Mannheim and London, 1837.

was, that ambition, and even false ambition, had laid hold of him ; that his way of life was not wise. Whither could it lead ? Where could it stop ? New farms there remained ever to be bought, while new novels could pay for them. More and more success but gave more and more appetite, more and more audacity. The impromptu writing must have waxed ever thinner ; declined faster and faster into the questionable category, into the condemnable, into the generally condemned. Already there existed, in secret, everywhere a considerable opposition party ; witnesses of the Waverley miracles, but unable to believe in them, forced silently to protest against them. Such opposition party was in the sure case to grow ; and even, with the impromptu process ever going on, ever waxing thinner, to draw the world over to it. Silent protest must at length have come to words ; harsh truths, backed by harsher facts of a world-popularity overwrought and worn-out, behoved to have been spoken ;—such as can be spoken now without reluctance, when they can pain the brave man's heart no more. Who knows ? Perhaps it was better ordered to be all *otherwise*. Otherwise, at any rate, it was. One day the Constable mountain, which seemed to stand strong like the other rock mountains, gave suddenly, as the icebergs do, a loud-sounding crack ; suddenly, with huge clangor, shivered itself into ice-dust ; and sank, carrying much along with it. In one day Scott's high-heaped money-wages became fairy-money and nonentity ; in one day the rich man and lord of land saw himself penniless, landless, a bankrupt among creditors.

It was a hard trial. He met it proudly, bravely,—like a brave proud man of the world. Perhaps there had been a prouder way still : to have owned honestly that he *was* unsuccessful, then, all bankrupt, broken, in the world's goods and repute ; and to have turned elsewhither for some refuge. Refuge did lie elsewhere ; but it was not Scott's course, or fashion of mind, to seek it there. To say, Hitherto I have been all in the wrong, and this my fame and pride, now broken, was an empty delusion and spell of accursed witchcraft ! It was difficult for flesh and blood ! He said, I will retrieve myself, and make my point good yet, or die for it. Silently, like a proud strong man, he girt himself to the Hercules' task, of removing rubbish-mountains, since that was it; of paying large ransoms by what he could still write and sell. In his declining years, too ; misfortune is doubly and trebly unfortunate that befalls us then. Scott fell to his Hercules'

task like a very man, and went on with it unweariedly ; with a noble cheerfulness, while his life-strings were cracking, he grappled with it, and wrestled with it, years long, in death-grips, strength to strength ;—and *it* proved the stronger ; and his life and heart did crack and break : the cordage of a most strong heart ! Over these last writings of Scott, his *Napoleons, Demonologies, Scotch Histories,* and the rest, criticism, finding still much to wonder at, much to commend, will utter no word of blame ; this one word only, Woe is me ! The noble war-horse that once laughed at the shaking of the spear, how is he doomed to toil himself dead, dragging ignoble wheels ! Scott's descent was like that of a spent projectile ; rapid, straight down ;—perhaps mercifully so. It is a tragedy, as all life is ; one proof more that Fortune stands on a restless *globe* ; that Ambition, literary, warlike, politic, pecuniary, never yet profited any man.

Our last extract shall be from Volume Sixth ; a very tragical one. Tragical, yet still beautiful ; waste Ruin's havoc borrowing a kind of sacredness from a yet sterner visitation, that of Death ! Scott has withdrawn into a solitary lodging-house in Edinburgh, to do daily the day's work there ; and had to leave his wife at Abbotsford in the last stage of disease. He went away silently ; looked silently at the sleeping face he scarcely hoped ever to see again. We quote from a Diary he had begun to keep in those months, on hint from Byron's *Ravenna Journal* : copious sections of it render this Sixth Volume more interesting than any of the former ones :

" *Abbotsford, May* 11 (1826).— . . . It withers my heart to think of it, and to recollect that I can hardly hope again to seek confidence and counsel from that ear, to which all might be safely confided. But in her present lethargic state, what would my attendance have availed ?—and Anne has promised close and constant intelligence. I must dine with James Ballantyne to-day *en famille.* I cannot help it ; but would rather be at home and alone. However, I can go out too. I will not yield to the barren sense of hopelessness which struggles to invade me."

" *Edinburgh,—Mrs. Brown's lodgings, North St. David Street—May* 12.—I passed a pleasant day with kind J. B., which was a great relief from the black dog, which would have worried me at home. He was quite alone.

" Well, here I am in Arden. And I may say with Touch-

stone, ' When I was at home I was in a better place ; ' I must, when there is occasion, draw to my own Baillie Nicol Jarvie's consolation—' One cannot carry the comforts of the Saut-Market about with one.' Were I at ease in mind, I think the body is very well cared for. Only one other lodger in the house, a Mr. Shandy,—a clergyman, and, despite his name, said to be a quiet one."

" *May* 14.—A fair good-morrow to you, Mr. Sun, who are shining so brightly on these dull walls. Methinks you look as if you were looking as bright on the banks of the Tweed ; but look where you will, Sir Sun, you look upon sorrow and suffering.—Hogg was here yesterday, in danger, from having obtained an accommodation of £100 from James Ballantyne, which he is now obliged to repay. I am unable to help the poor fellow, being obliged to borrow myself."

" *May* 15.—Received the melancholy intelligence that all is over at Abbotsford."

" *Abbotsford, May* 16.—She died at nine in the morning, after being very ill for two days—easy at last. I arrived here late last night. Anne is worn out, and has had hysterics, which returned on my arrival. Her broken accents were like those of a child, the language as well as the tones broken, but in the most gentle voice of submission. ' Poor mamma—never return again—gone forever—a better place.' Then, when she came to herself, she spoke with sense, freedom and strength of mind, till her weakness returned. It would have been inexpressibly moving to me as a stranger—what was it then to the father and the husband ? For myself, I scarce know how I feel ; sometimes as firm as the Bass Rock, sometimes as weak as the water that breaks on it. I am as alert at thinking and deciding as I ever was in my life. Yet, when I contrast what this place now is, with what it has been not long since, I think my heart will break. Lonely, aged, deprived of my family—all but poor Anne ; an impoverished, an embarrassed man, deprived of the sharer of my thoughts and counsels, who could always talk-down my sense of the calamitous apprehensions which break the heart that must bear them alone—Even her foibles were of service to me, by giving me things to think of beyond my weary self-reflections.

" I have seen her. The figure I beheld is, and is not my Charlotte—my thirty-years companion. There is the same symmetry of form, though those limbs are rigid which were once so gracefully elastic—but that yellow mask, with

pinched features, which seems to mock life rather than emulate it, can it be the face that was once so full of lively expressions? I will not look on it again. Anne thinks her little changed, because the latest idea she had formed of her mother is as she appeared under circumstances of extreme pain. Mine go back to a period of comparative ease. If I write long in this way, I shall write-down my resolution, which I should rather write-up, if I could."

"*May* 18.— . . . Cerements of lead and of wood already hold her; cold earth must have her soon. But it is not my Charlotte, it is not the bride of my youth, the mother of my children, that will be laid among the ruins of Dryburgh, which we have so often visited in gaiety and pastime. No, no."

"*May* 22.— . . . Well, I am not apt to shrink from that which is my duty, merely because it is painful; but I wish this funeral-day over. A kind of cloud of stupidity hangs about me, as if all were unreal that men seem to be doing and talking."

"*May* 26.— . . . Were an enemy coming upon my house, would I not do my best to fight, although oppressed in spirits; and shall a similar despondency prevent me from mental exertion? It shall not, by Heaven!"

"*Edinburgh, May* 30.—Returned to town last night with Charles. This morning resume ordinary habits of rising early, working in the morning, and attending the Court. . . . I finished correcting the proofs for the Quarterly; it is but a flimsy article, but then the circumstances were most untoward.—This has been a melancholy day—most melancholy. I am afraid poor Charles found me weeping. I do not know what other folks feel, but with me the hysterical passion that impels tears is a terrible violence—a sort of throttling sensation—then succeeded by a state of dreaming stupidity, in which I ask if my poor Charlotte can actually be dead." *

This is beautiful as well as tragical. Other scenes, in that Seventh Volume, must come, which will have no beauty, but be tragical only. It is better that we are to end here.

And so the curtain falls; and the strong Walter Scott is with us no more. A possession from him does remain; widely scattered; yet attainable; not inconsiderable. It can be said of him, When he departed, he took a Man's life

* Vol. vi. pp. 297–307.

along with him. No sounder piece of British manhood was put together in that eighteenth century of Time. Alas, his fine Scotch face, with its shaggy honesty, sagacity and goodness, when we saw it latterly on the Edinburgh streets, was all worn with care, the joy all fled from it ;—ploughed deep with labour and sorrow. We shall never forget it ; we shall never see it again. Adieu, Sir Walter, pride of all Scotchmen, take our proud and sad farewell.

DEATH OF GOETHE

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[1832]

In the Obituary of these days stands one article of quite peculiar import; the time, the place and particulars of which will have to be often repeated and re-written, and continue in remembrance many centuries: this namely, that Johann Wolfgang von Goethe died at Weimar, on the 22nd March 1832. It was about eleven in the morning; "he expired," says the record, "without any apparent suffering, having, a few minutes previously, called for paper for the purpose of writing, and expressed his delight at the arrival of spring." A beautiful death; like that of a soldier found faithful at his post, and in the cold hand his arms still grasped! The Poet's last words are a greeting of the new-awakened Earth; his last movement is to work at his appointed task. Beautiful; what we might call a Classic sacred-death; if it were not rather an Elijah-translation,—in a chariot, not of fire and terror, but of hope and soft vernal sunbeams! It was at Frankfort-on-Mayn, on the 28th August 1749, that this man entered the world: and now, gently welcoming the birthday of his eighty-second spring, he closes his eyes, and takes farewell.

So, then, our Greatest has departed. That melody of life, with its cunning tones, which took captive ear and heart, has gone silent; the heavenly force that dwelt here victorious over so much, is here no longer; thus far, not farther, by speech and by act, shall the wise man utter himself forth. The End! What solemn meaning lies in that sound, as it peals mournfully through the soul, when a living friend has passed away! All now is closed, irrevocable; the changeful life-picture, growing daily into new coherence, under new touches and hues, has suddenly become completed and unchangeable; there as it lay, it is dipped, from this moment, in the æther of the heavens, and shines trans-

figured, to endure even so—forever. Time and Time's Empire; stern, wide-devouring, yet not without their grandeur! The week-day man, who was one of us, has put on the garment of Eternity, and become radiant and triumphant; the Present is all at once the Past; Hope is suddenly cut away, and only the backward vistas of Memory remain, shone on by a light that proceeds not from this earthly sun.

The death of Goethe, even for the many hearts that personally loved him, is not a thing to be lamented over; is to be viewed, in his own spirit, as a thing full of greatness and sacredness. For all men it is appointed once to die. To this man the full measure of a man's life has been granted, and a course and task such as to only a few in the whole generations of the world: what else could we hope or require but that now he should be called hence, and have leave to depart, having finished the work that was given him to do? If his course, as we may say of him more justly than of any other, was like the Sun's, so also was his going down. For indeed, as the material Sun is the eye and revealer of all things, so is Poetry, so is the World-Poet in a spiritual sense. Goethe's life too, if we examine it, is well represented in that emblem of a solar Day. Beautifully rose our summer sun, gorgeous in the red fervid east, scattering the spectres and sickly damps (of both of which there were enough to scatter); strong, benignant in his noonday clearness, walking triumphant through the upper realms; and now, mark also how he sets! "*So stirbt ein Held; anbetungsvoll*, So dies a hero; sight to be worshipped!"

And yet, when the inanimate material sun has sunk and disappeared, it will happen that we stand to gaze into the still-glowing west; and there rise great pale motionless clouds, like coulisses or curtains, to close the flame-theatre within; and then, in that death-pause of the Day, an unspeakable feeling will come over us: it is as if the poor sounds of Time, those hammerings of tired Labour on his anvils, those voices of simple men, had become awful and supernatural; as if in listening, we could hear them "mingle with the ever-pealing tone of old Eternity." In such moments the secrets of life lie opener to us; mysterious things flit over the soul; Life itself seems holier, wonderful and fearful. How much more when our sunset was of a living sun; and *its* bright countenance and shining return to us, not on the morrow, but "no more again, at all, for-

ever!" In such a scene, silence, as over the mysterious great, is for him that has some feeling thereof the fittest mood. Nevertheless by silence the distant is not brought into communion; the feeling of each is without response from the bosom of his brother. There are now, what some years ago there were not, English hearts that know something of what those three words, "Death of Goethe," mean; and to such men, among their many thoughts on the event, which are not to be translated into speech, may these few, through that imperfect medium, prove acceptable.

"Death," says the Philosopher, "is a commingling of Eternity with Time; in the death of a good man, Eternity is seen looking through Time." With such a sublimity here offered to eye and heart, it is not unnatural to look with new earnestness before and behind, and ask, What space in those years and æons of computed Time, this man with his activity may influence; what relation to the world of change and mortality, which the earthly name Life, he who is even now called to the Immortals has borne and may bear.

"Goethe, it is commonly said, made a New Era in Literature; a Poetic Era began with him, the end or ulterior tendencies of which are yet nowise generally visible." This common saying is a true one; and true with a far deeper meaning than, to the most, it conveys. Were the Poet but a sweet sound and singer, solacing the ear of the idle with pleasant songs; and the new Poet one who could sing his idle pleasant song to a new air,—we should account him a small matter, and his performance small. But this man, it is not unknown to many, was a Poet in such a sense as the late generations have witnessed no other; as it is, in this generation, a kind of distinction to believe in the existence of, in the possibility of. The true Poet is ever, as of old, the Seer; whose eye has been gifted to discern the godlike Mystery of God's Universe, and decipher some new lines of its celestial writing; we can still call him a *Vates* and Seer; for he *sees* into this greatest of secrets, "the open secret"; hidden things become clear; how the Future (both resting on Eternity) is but another phasis of the Present: thereby are his words in very truth prophetic; what he has spoken shall be done.

It begins now to be everywhere surmised that the real Force, which in this world all things must obey, is Insight, Spiritual Vision and Determination. The Thought is

parent of the Deed, nay, is living soul of it, and last and continual, as well as first mover of it; is the foundation and beginning and essence, therefore, of man's whole existence here below. In this sense, it has been said, the Word of man (the uttered Thought of man) is still a magic formula, whereby he rules the world. Do not the winds and waters, and all tumultuous powers, inanimate and animate, obey him? A poor, quite mechanical Magician speaks; and fire-winged ships cross the Ocean at his bidding. Or mark, above all, that "raging of the nations," wholly in contention, desperation and dark chaotic fury; how the meek voice of a Hebrew Martyr and Redeemer stills it into order, and a savage Earth becomes kind and beautiful, and the habitation of horrid cruelty a temple of peace. The true Sovereign of the world, who moulds the world like soft wax, according to his pleasure, is he who lovingly *sees* into the world; the "inspired Thinker," whom in these days we name Poet. The true Sovereign is the Wise Man.

However, as the Moon, which can heave-up the Atlantic, sends not in her obedient billows at once, but gradually; and the Tide, which swells today on our shores and washes every creek, rose in the bosom of the great Ocean (astronomers assure us) eight-and-forty hours ago; and indeed, all world-movements, by nature deep, are by nature calm, and flow and swell onwards with a certain majestic slowness: so too with the Impulse of a Great Man, and the effect he has to manifest on other men. To such a one we may grant some generation or two, before the celestial Impulse he impressed on the world will universally proclaim itself, and become (like the working of the Moon) if still not intelligible, yet palpable, to all men; some generation or two more, wherein it has to grow, and expand, and envelop all things, before it can reach its acme; and thereafter mingling with other movements and new impulses, at length cease to require a specific observation or designation. Longer or shorter such period may be, according to the nature of the Impulse itself, and of the elements it works in; according, above all, as the Impulse was intrinsically great and deep-reaching, or only wide-spread, superficial and transient. Thus, if David Hume is at this hour pontiff of the world, and rules most hearts, and guides most tongues (the hearts and tongues even of those that in vain rebel against him), there are nevertheless symptoms that his task draws towards completion and now in the distance his successor becomes

visible. On the other hand, we have seen a Napoleon, like some gunpowder force (with which sort, indeed, he chiefly worked), explode his whole virtue suddenly, and thunder himself out and silent, in a space of five-and-twenty years. While again, for a man of true greatness, working with spiritual implements, two centuries is no uncommon period; nay, on this Earth of ours, there have been men whose Impulse had not completed its development till after fifteen hundred years, and might perhaps be seen still individually subsistent after two thousand.

But, as was once written, "though our clock strikes when there is a change from hour to hour, no hammer in the Horologe of Time peals through the Universe to proclaim that there is a change from era to era." The true Beginning is oftenest unnoticed and unnoticeable. Thus do men go wrong in their reckoning; and grope hither and thither, not knowing where they are, in what course their history runs. Within this last century, for instance, with its wild doings and destroyings, what hope, grounded on miscalculation, ending in disappointment! How many world-famous victories were gained and lost, dynasties founded and subverted, revolutions accomplished, constitutions sworn to; and ever the "new era" was come, was coming, yet still it came not, but the time continued sick! Alas, all these were but spasmodic convulsions of the death-sick time: the crisis of cure and regeneration to the time was not there indicated. The real new era was when a Wise Man came into the world, with clearness of vision and greatness of soul to accomplish this old high enterprise, amid these new difficulties, yet again: A Life of Wisdom. Such a man became, by Heaven's pre-appointment, in very deed the Redeemer of the time. Did he not bear the curse of the time? He was filled full with its scepticism, bitterness, hollowness and thousandfold contradictions, till his heart was like to break; but he subdued all this, rose victorious over this, and manifoldly by word and act showed others that come after, how to do the like. Honour to him who first "through the impassable paves a road"! Such, indeed, is the task of every great man; nay of every good man in one or the other sphere, since goodness is greatness, and the good man, high or humble, is ever a martyr and "spiritual hero that ventures forward into the gulf for our deliverance." The gulf into which this man ventured, which he tamed and rendered habitable, was the greatest

and most perilous of all, wherein truly all others lie included: *The whole distracted Existence of man is an age of Unbelief.* Whoso lives, whoso with earnest mind studies to live wisely in that mad element, may yet know, perhaps too well, what an enterprise was here; and for the Chosen Man of our time who could prevail in it, have the higher reverence, and a gratitude such as belongs to no other.

How far he prevailed in it, and by what means, with what endurances and achievements, will in due season be estimated. Those volumes called *Goethe's Works* will now receive no farther addition or alteration; and the record of his whole spiritual Endeavour lies written there,—were the man or men but ready that could read it rightly! A glorious record; wherein he who would understand himself and his environment, who struggles for escape out of darkness into light as for the one thing needful, will long thankfully study. For the whole chaotic Time, what it has suffered, attained and striven after, stands imaged there; interpreted, ennobled into poetic clearness. From the passionate longings and wailings of *Werter*, spoken as from the heart of all Europe; onwards through the wild unearthly melody of *Faust*, like the spirit-song of falling worlds; to that serenely smiling wisdom of *Meisters Lehrjahre*, and the *German Hafiz*,—what an interval; and all enfolded in an ethereal music, as from unknown spheres, harmoniously uniting all! A long interval; and wide as well as long; for this was a universal man. History, Science, Art, human Activity under every aspect; the laws of Light in his *Farbenlehre*; the laws of wild Italian Life in his *Benvenuto Cellini*;—nothing escaped him; nothing that he did not look into, that he did not see into. Consider, too, the genuineness of whatsoever he did; his hearty idiomatic way; simplicity with loftiness, and nobleness, and aerial grace! Pure works of art, completed with an antique Grecian polish, as *Torquato Tasso*, as *Iphigenie*; *Proverbs*; *Xenien*; Patriarchal Sayings, which, since the Hebrew Scriptures were closed, we know not where to match; in whose homely depths lie often the materials for volumes.

To measure and estimate all this, as we said, the time is not come; a century hence will be the fitter time. He who investigates it best will find its meaning greatest, and be the readiest to acknowledge that it transcends him. Let the reader have *seen*, before he attempts to *oversee*. A poor

reader, in the mean while, were he who discerned not here the authentic rudiments of that New Era, whereof we have so often had false warning. Wondrously, the wrecks and pulverised rubbish of ancient things, institutions, religions, forgotten noblenesses, made alive again by the breath of Genius, lie here in new coherence and incipient union, the spirit of Art working creative through the mass; that chaos, into which the eighteenth century with its wild war of hypocrites and sceptics had reduced the Past, begins here to be once more a *world*.—This, the highest that can be said of written Books, is to be said of these: there is in them a New Time, the prophecy and beginning of a New Time. The corner-stone of a new social edifice for mankind is laid there; firmly, as before, on the natural rock; far-extending traces of a ground-plan we can also see; which future centuries may go on to enlarge, to amend and work into reality. These sayings seem strange to some; nevertheless they are not empty exaggerations, but expressions, in their way, of a belief, which is not now of yesterday; perhaps when Goethe has been read and meditated for another generation, they will not seem so strange.

Precious is the new light of Knowledge which our Teacher conquers for us; yet small to the new light of Love which also we derive from him: the most important element of any man's performance is the Life he has accomplished. Under the intellectual union of man and man, which works by precept, lies a holier union of affection, working by example; the influences of which latter, mystic, deep-reaching, all-embracing, can still less be computed. For Love is ever the beginning of Knowledge, as fire is of light; and works also more in the manner of *fire*. That Goethe was a great Teacher of men means already that he was a good man; that he had himself learned; in the school of experience had striven and proved victorious. To how many hearers, languishing, nigh dead, in the airless dungeon of Unbelief (a true vacuum and nonentity), has the assurance that there was such a man, that such a man was still possible, come like tidings of great joy! He who would learn to reconcile reverence with clearness; to deny and defy what is False, yet believe and worship what is True; amid raging factions, bent on what is either altogether empty or has substance in it only for a day, which stormfully convulse and tear hither and thither a distracted expiring system of society, to adjust himself aright; and, working for the

world and in the world, keep himself unspotted from the world,—let him look here. This man, we may say, became morally great, by being in his own age, what in some other ages many might have been, a genuine man. His grand excellency was this, that he was genuine. As his primary faculty, the foundation of all others, was Intellect, depth and force of Vision; so his primary virtue was Justice, was the courage to be just. A giant's strength we admired in him; yet, strength ennobled into softest mildness; even like that "silent rock-bound strength of a world," on whose bosom, which rests on the adamant, grow flowers. The greatest of hearts was also the bravest; fearless, unwearied, peacefully invincible. A completed man: the trembling sensibility, the wild enthusiasm of a Mignon can assort with the scornful world-mockery of a Mephistopheles; and each side of many-sided life receives its due from him.

Goethe reckoned Schiller happy that he died young, in the full vigour of his days; that we could "figure him as a youth forever." To himself a different, higher destiny was appointed. Through all the changes of man's life, onwards to its extreme verge he was to go; and through them all nobly. In youth, flatterings of fortune, uninterrupted outward prosperity cannot corrupt him; a wise observer has to remark: "None but a Goethe, at the Sun of earthly happiness, can keep his phœnix-wings unsinged."—Through manhood, in the most complex relation, as poet, courtier, politician, man of business, man of speculation; in the middle of revolutions and counter-revolutions, outward and spiritual; with the world loudly for him, with the world loudly or silently against him; in all seasons and situations, he holds equally on his way. Old age itself, which is called dark and feeble, he was to render lovely: who that looked upon him there, venerable in himself, and in the world's reverence ever the clearer, the purer, but could have prayed that he too were such an old man? And did not the kind Heavens continue kind, and grant to a career so glorious the worthiest end?

Such was Goethe's Life; such has its departure been. He sleeps now beside his Schiller and his Carl August of Weimar; so had the Prince willed it, that between these two should be his own final rest. In life they were united, in death they are not divided. The unwearied Workman now rests from his labours; the fruit of these is left growing, and to grow. His earthly years have been numbered and

ended : but of his Activity, for it stood rooted in the Eternal, there is no end. All that we mean by the higher Literature of Germany, which is the higher Literature of Europe, already gathers round this man, as its creator ; of which grand object, dawning mysterious on a world that hoped not for it, who is there that can measure the significance and far-reaching influences ? The Literature of Europe will pass away ; Europe itself, the Earth itself will pass away : this little life-boat of an Earth, with its noisy crew of a Mankind, and all their troubled History, will one day have vanished ; faded like a cloud-speck from the azure of the All ! What, then, is man ! What, then, is man ! He endures but for an hour, and is crushed before the moth. Yet in the being and in the working of a faithful man is there already (as all faith, from the beginning, gives assurance) a something that pertains not to this wild death-element of Time ; that triumphs over Time, and *is*, and will be, when Time shall be no more.

And now we turn back into the world, withdrawing from this new-made grave. The man whom we love lies there : but glorious, worthy ; and his spirit yet lives in us with an authentic life. Could each here vow to do his little task, even as the Departed did his great one ; in the manner of a true man, not for a Day, but for Eternity ! To live, as he counselled and commanded, not commodiously in the Reputable, the Plausible, the Half, but resolutely in the Whole, the Good, the True :

"*Im Ganzen, Guten, Wahren resolut zu leben !*"

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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[1820]

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WERE we required to characterise this age of ours by any single epithet, we should be tempted to call it, not an Heroical, Devotional, Philosophical, or Moral Age, but, above all others, the Mechanical Age. It is the Age of Machinery, in every outward and inward sense of that word; the age which, with its whole undivided might, forwards, teaches and practises the great art of adapting means to ends. Nothing is now done directly, or by hand; all is by rule and calculated contrivance. For the simplest operation, some helps and accompaniments, some cunning abbreviating process is in readiness. Our old modes of exertion are all discredited, and thrown aside. On every hand, the living artisan is driven from his workshop, to make room for a speedier, inanimate one. The shuttle drops from the fingers of the weaver, and falls into iron fingers that ply it faster. The sailor furls his sail, and lays down his oar; and bids a strong, unwearied servant, on vaporous wings, bear him through the waters. Men have crossed oceans by steam; the Birmingham Fire-king has visited the fabulous East; and the genius of the Cape, were there any Camoens now to sing it, has again been alarmed, and with far stranger thunders than Gama's. There is no end to machinery. Even the horse is stripped of his harness, and finds a fleet fire-horse yoked in his stead. Nay, we have an artist that hatches chickens by steam; the very brood-hen is to be superseded! For all earthly, and for some unearthly purposes, we have machines and mechanic furtherances; for mincing our cabbages; for casting us into magnetic sleep. We remove mountains, and make seas our smooth highway; nothing can resist us. We war with rude Nature; and, by our resistless engines, come off always victorious, and loaded with spoils.

What wonderful accessions have thus been made, and are still making, to the physical power of mankind ; how much better fed, clothed, lodged and, in all outward respects, accommodated men now are, or might be, by a given quantity of labour, is a grateful reflection which forces itself on every one. What changes, too, this addition of power is introducing into the Social System ; how wealth has more and more increased, and at the same time gathered itself more and more into masses, strangely altering the old relations, and increasing the distance between the rich and the poor, will be a question for Political Economists, and a much more complex and important one than any they have yet engaged with.

But leaving these matters for the present, let us observe how the mechanical genius of our time has diffused itself into quite other provinces. Not the external and physical alone is now managed by machinery, but the internal and spiritual also. Here too nothing follows its spontaneous course, nothing is left to be accomplished by old natural methods. Everything has its cunningly devised implements, its preëstablished apparatus ; it is not done by hand, but by machinery. Thus we have machines for Education : Lancastrian machines ; Hamiltonian machines ; monitors, maps and emblems. Instruction, that mysterious communing of Wisdom with Ignorance, is no longer an indefinable tentative process, requiring a study of individual attitudes, and a perpetual variation of means and methods, to attain the same end ; but a secure, universal, straightforward business, to be conducted in the gross, by proper mechanism, with such intellect as comes to hand. Then, we have Religious machines, of all imaginable varieties ; the Bible-Society, professing a far higher and heavenly structure, is found, on inquiry, to be altogether an earthly contrivance : supported by collection of moneys, by fomenting of vanities, by puffing, intrigue and chicane ; a machine for converting the Heathen. It is the same in all other departments. Has any man, or any society of men, a truth to speak, a piece of spiritual work to do ; they can nowise proceed at once and with the mere natural organs, but must first call a public meeting, appoint committees, issue prospectuses, eat a public dinner ; in a word, construct or borrow machinery, wherewith to speak it and do it. Without machinery they were hopeless, helpless ; a colony of Hindoo weavers squatting in the heart of Lancashire. Mark,

too, how every machine must have its moving power, in some of the great currents of society; every little sect among us, Unitarians, Utilitarians, Anabaptists, Phrenologists, must have its Periodical, its monthly or quarterly Magazine;—hanging out, like its windmill, into the *popularis aura*, to grind meal for the society.

With individuals, in like manner, natural strength avails little. No individual now hopes to accomplish the poorest enterprise single-handed and without mechanical aids; he must make interest with some existing corporation, and till his field with their oxen. In these days, more emphatically than ever, "to live, signifies to unite with a party, or to make one." Philosophy, Science, Art, Literature, all depend on machinery. No Newton, by silent meditation, now discovers the system of the world from the falling of an apple; but some quite other than Newton stands in his Museum, his Scientific Institution, and behind whole batteries of retorts, digesters, and galvanic piles imperatively "interrogates Nature,"—who, however, shows no haste to answer. In defect of Raphaels, and Angelos, and Mozarts, we have Royal Academies of Painting, Sculpture, Music; whereby the languishing spirit of Art may be strengthened, as by the more generous diet of a Public Kitchen. Literature, too, has its Paternoster-row mechanism, its Trade-dinners, its Editorial conclaves, and huge subterranean, puffing bellows; so that books are not only printed, but, in a great measure, written and sold, by machinery.

National culture, spiritual benefit of all sorts, is under the same management. No Queen Christina, in these times, needs to send for her Descartes; no King Frederick for his Voltaire, and painfully nourish him with pensions and flattery: any sovereign of taste, who wishes to enlighten his people, has only to impose a new tax, and with the proceeds establish Philosophic Institutes. Hence the Royal and Imperial Societies, the Bibliothèques, Glyptothèques, Technothèques, which front us in all capital cities; like so many well-finished hives, to which it is expected the stray agencies of Wisdom will swarm of their own accord, and hive and make honey. In like manner, among ourselves, when it is thought that religion is declining, we have only to vote half-a-million's worth of bricks and mortar, and build new churches. In Ireland it seems they have gone still farther, having actually established

a "Penny-a-week Purgatory-Society!" Thus does the Genius of Mechanism stand by to help us in all difficulties and emergencies, and with his iron back bears all our burdens.

These things, which we state lightly enough here, are yet of deep import, and indicate a mighty change in our whole manner of existence. For the same habit regulates not our modes of action alone, but our modes of thought and feeling. Men are grown mechanical in head and in heart, as well as in hand. They have lost faith in individual endeavour, and in natural force, of any kind. Not for internal perfection, but for external combinations and arrangements, for institutions, constitutions,—for Mechanism of one sort or other, do they hope and struggle. Their whole efforts, attachments, opinions, turn on mechanism, and are of a mechanical character.

We may trace this tendency in all the great manifestations of our time; in its intellectual aspect, the studies it most favours and its manner of conducting them; in its practical aspects, its politics, arts, religion, morals; in the whole sources, and throughout the whole currents, of its spiritual, no less than its material activity.

Consider, for example, the state of Science generally, in Europe, at this period. It is admitted, on all sides, that the Metaphysical and Moral Sciences are falling into decay, while the Physical are engrossing, every day, more respect and attention. In most of the European nations there is now no such thing as a Science of Mind; only more or less advancement in the general science, or the special sciences, of matter. The French were the first to desert Metaphysics; and though they have lately affected to revive their school, it has yet no signs of vitality. The land of Malebranche, Pascal, Descartes and Fénelon, has now only its Cousins and Villemains; while, in the department of Physics, it reckons far other names. Among ourselves, the Philosophy of Mind, after a rickety infancy, which never reached the vigour of manhood, fell suddenly into decay, languished and finally died out, with its last amiable cultivator, Professor Stewart. In no nation but Germany has any decisive effort been made in psychological science; not to speak of any decisive result. The science of the age, in short, in physical, chemical, physiological; in all shapes mechanical. Our favourite Mathematics, the highly prized exponent of all these other sciences, has also become more and more

mechanical. Excellence in what is called its higher departments depends less on natural genius than on acquired expertness in wielding its machinery. Without undervaluing the wonderful results which a Lagrange or Laplace educes by means of it, we may remark, that their calculus, differential and integral, is little else than a more cunningly-constructed arithmetical mill; where the factors being put in, are, as it were, ground into the true product, under cover and without other effort on our part than steady turning of the handle. We have more Mathematics than ever; but less Mathesis. Archimedes and Plato could not have read the *Mécanique Céleste*; but neither would the whole French Institute see aught in that saying, "God geometrises!" but a sentimental rodomontade.

Nay, our whole Metaphysics itself, from Locke's time downwards, has been physical; not a spiritual philosophy, but a material one. The singular estimation in which his Essay was so long held as a scientific work (an estimation grounded, indeed, on the estimable character of the man) will one day be thought a curious indication of the spirit of these times. His whole doctrine is mechanical, in its aim and origin, in its method and its results. It is not a philosophy of the mind: it is a mere discussion concerning the origin of our consciousness, or ideas, or whatever else they are called; a genetic history of what we see *in* the mind. The grand secrets of Necessity and Freewill, of the Mind's vital or non-vital dependence on Matter, of our mysterious relations to Time and Space, to God, to the Universe, are not, in the faintest degree, touched on in these inquiries; and seem not to have the smallest connexion with them.

The last class of our Scotch Metaphysicians had a dim notion that much of this was wrong; but they knew not how to right it. The school of Reid had also from the first taken a mechanical course, not seeing any other. The singular conclusions at which Hume, setting out from their admitted premises, was arriving, brought this school into being; they let loose Instinct, as an undiscriminating ban-dog, to guard them against these conclusions;—they tugged lustily at the logical chain by which Hume was so coldly towing them and the world into bottomless abysses of Atheism and Fatalism. But the chain somehow snapped between them; and the issue has been that nobody now cares about either,—any more than about Hartley's,

Darwin's or Priestley's contemporaneous doings in England. Hartley's vibrations and vibratiuncles, one would think, were material and mechanical enough ; but our Continental neighbours have gone still farther. " One of their philosophers has lately discovered, that " as the liver secretes bile, so does the brain secrete thought " ; which astonishing discovery Dr. Cabanis, more lately still, in his *Rapports du Physique et du Morale de l'Homme*, has pushed into its minutest developments.

The metaphysical philosophy of this last inquirer is certainly no shadowy or unsubstantial one. He fairly lays open our moral structure with his dissecting-knives and real metal probes ; and exhibits it to the inspection of mankind, by Leuwenhoek microscopes, and inflation with the anatomical blow-pipe. Thought, he is inclined to hold, is still secreted by the brain ; but then Poetry and Religion (and it is really worth knowing) are " a product of the smaller intestines " ! We have the greatest admiration for this learned doctor : with what scientific stoicism he walks through the land of wonders, unwondering ; like a wise man through some huge, gaudy, imposing Vauxhall, whose fireworks, cascades and symphonies, the vulgar may enjoy and believe in,—but where he finds nothing real but the saltpetre, pasteboard and catgut. His book may be regarded as the ultimatum of mechanical metaphysics in our time ; a remarkable realisation of what in Martinus Scriblerus was still only an idea, that " as the jack had a meat-roasting quality, so had the body a thinking quality,"—upon the strength of which the Nurembergers were to build a wood-and-leather man, " who should reason as well as most country parsons." Vaucanson did indeed make a wooden duck, that seemed to eat and digest ; but that bold scheme of the Nurembergers remained for a more modern virtuoso.

This condition of the two great departments of knowledge,—the outward, cultivated exclusively on mechanical principles ; the inward, finally abandoned, because, cultivated on such principles, it is found to yield no result,—sufficiently indicates the intellectual bias of our time, its all-pervading disposition towards that line of inquiry. In fact, an inward persuasion has long been diffusing itself, and now and then even comes to utterance, That, except the external, there are no true sciences ; that to the inward world (if there be any) our only conceivable road is through

the outward ; that, in short, what cannot be investigated and understood mechanically, cannot be investigated and understood at all. We advert the more particularly to these intellectual propensities, as to prominent symptoms of our age, because opinion is at all times doubly related to action, first as cause, then as effect ; and the speculative tendency of any age will therefore give us, on the whole, the best indications of its practical tendency.

Nowhere, for example, is the deep, almost exclusive faith we have in Mechanism more visible than in the Politics of this time. Civil government does by its nature include much that is mechanical, and must be treated accordingly. We term it indeed, in ordinary language, the Machine of Society, and talk of it as the grand working wheel from which all private machines must derive, or to which they must adapt, their movements. Considered merely as a metaphor, all this is well enough ; but here, as in so many other cases, the "foam hardens itself into a shell," and the shadow we have wantonly evoked stands terrible before us and will not depart at our bidding. Government includes much also that is not mechanical, and cannot be treated mechanically ; of which latter truth, as appears to us, the political speculations and exertions of our time are taking less and less cognisance.

Nay, in the very outset, we might note the mighty interest taken in *mere political arrangements*, as itself the sign of a mechanical age. The whole discontent of Europe takes this direction. The deep, strong cry of all civilised nations,—a cry which, every one now sees, must and will be answered, is : Give us a reform of Government : A good structure of legislation, a proper check upon the executive, a wise arrangement of the judiciary, is *all* that is wanting for human happiness. The Philosopher of this age is not a Socrates, a Plato, a Hooker, or Taylor, who inculcates on men the necessity and infinite worth of moral goodness, the great truth that our happiness depends on the mind which is within us, and not on the circumstances which are without us ; but a Smith, a DeLolme, a Bentham, who chiefly inculcates the reverse of this,—that our happiness depends entirely on external circumstances ; nay, that the strength and dignity of the mind within us is itself the creature and consequence of these. Were the laws, the government, in good order, all were well with us ; the rest would care for itself ! Dissentients from this opinion, expressed or

implied, are now rarely to be met with; widely and angrily as men differ in its application, the principle is admitted by all.

Equally mechanical, and of equal simplicity, are the methods proposed by both parties for completing or securing this all-sufficient perfection of arrangement. It is no longer the moral, religious, spiritual condition of the people that is our concern, but their physical, practical, economical condition, as regulated by public laws. Thus is the Body-politic more than ever worshipped and tendered; but the Soul-politic less than ever. Love of country, in any high or generous sense, in any other than an almost animal sense, or mere habit, has little importance attached to it in such reforms, or in the opposition shown them. Men are to be guided only by their self-interests. Good Government is a good balancing of these; and, except a keen eye and appetite for self-interest, requires no virtue in any quarter. To both parties it is emphatically a machine: to the discontented, a "taxing-machine"; to the contented, a "machine for securing property." Its duties and its faults are not those of a father, but of an active parish-constable.

Thus it is by the mere condition of the machine, by preserving it untouched, or else by reconstructing it, and oiling it anew, that man's salvation as a social being is to be insured and indefinitely promoted. Contrive the fabric of law aright, and without farther effort on your part, that divine spirit of Freedom, which all hearts venerate and long for, will of herself come to inhabit it; and under her healing wings every noxious influence will wither, every good and salutary one more and more expand. Nay, so devoted are we to this principle, and at the same time so curiously mechanical, that a new trade, specially grounded on it, has arisen among us, under the name of "Codification," or code-making in the abstract; whereby any people, for a reasonable consideration, may be accommodated with a patent code;—more easily than curious individuals with patent breeches, for the people does *not* need to be measured first.

To us who live in the midst of all this, and see continually the faith, hope and practice of every one founded on Mechanism of one kind or other, it is apt to seem quite natural, and as if it could never have been otherwise. Nevertheless, if

we recollect or reflect a little, we shall find both that it has been, and might again be otherwise. The domain of Mechanism,—meaning thereby political, ecclesiastical or other outward establishments,—was once considered as embracing, and we are persuaded can at any time embrace, but a limited portion of man's interests, and by no means the highest portion.

To speak a little pedantically, there is a science of *Dynamics* in man's fortunes and nature, as well as of *Mechanics*. There is a science which treats of, and practically addresses, the primary, unmodified forces and energies of man, the mysterious springs of Love, and Fear, and Wonder, of Enthusiasm, Poetry, Religion, all which have a truly vital and *infinite* character; as well as a science which practically addresses the finite, modified developments of these, when they take the shape of immediate "motives," as hope of reward, or as fear of punishment.

Now, it is certain, that in former times the wise men, the enlightened lovers of their kind, who appeared generally as Moralists, Poets or Priests, did, without neglecting the Mechanical province, deal chiefly with the Dynamical; applying themselves chiefly to regulate, increase and purify the inward primary powers of man; and fancying that herein lay the main difficulty, and the best service they could undertake. But a wide difference is manifest in our age. For the wise men, who now appear as Political Philosophers, deal exclusively with the Mechanical province; and occupying themselves in counting-up and estimating men's motives, strive by curious checking and balancing, and other adjustments of Profit and Loss, to guide them to their true advantage: while, unfortunately, those same "motives" are so innumerable, and so variable in every individual, that no really useful conclusion can ever be drawn from their enumeration. But though Mechanism, wisely contrived, has done much for man in a social and moral point of view, we cannot be persuaded that it has ever been the chief source of his worth or happiness. Consider the great elements of human enjoyment, the attainments and possessions that exalt man's life to its present height, and see what part of these he owes to institutions, to Mechanism of any kind; and what to the instinctive, unbounded force, which Nature herself lent him, and still continues to him. Shall we say, for example, that Science and Art are indebted principally to the founders of Schools

and Universities? Did not Science originate rather, and gain advancement, in the obscure closets of the Roger Bacons, Keplers, Newtons; in the workshops of the Fausts and the Watts; wherever, and in what guise soever Nature, from the first time downwards, had sent a gifted spirit upon the earth? Again, were Homer and Shakspeare members of any beneficed guild, or made Poets by means of it? Were Painting and Sculpture created by forethought, brought into the world by institutions for that end? No; Science and Art have, from first to last, been the free gift of Nature; an unsolicited, unexpected gift; often even a fatal one. These things rose up, as it were, by spontaneous growth, in the free soil and sunshine of Nature. They were not planted or grafted, nor even greatly multiplied or improved by the culture or manuring of institutions. Generally speaking, they have derived only partial help from these; often enough have suffered damage. They made constitutions for themselves. They originated in the Dynamical nature of man, not in his Mechanical nature.

Or, to take an infinitely higher instance, that of the Christian Religion, which, under every theory of it, in the believing or unbelieving mind, must ever be regarded as the crowning glory, or rather the life and soul, of our whole modern culture: How did Christianity arise and spread abroad among men? Was it by institutions, and establishments and well-arranged systems of mechanism? Not so; on the contrary, in all past and existing institutions for those ends, its divine spirit has invariably been found to languish and decay. It arose in the mystic deeps of man's soul; and was spread abroad by the "preaching of the word," by simple, altogether natural and individual efforts; and flew, like hallowed fire, from heart to heart, till all were purified and illuminated by it; and its heavenly light shone, as it still shines, and (as sun or star) will ever shine, through the whole dark destinies of man. Here again was no Mechanism; man's highest attainment was accomplished Dynamically, not Mechanically.

Nay, we will venture to say, that no high attainment, not even any far-extending movement among men, was ever accomplished otherwise. Strange as it may seem, if we read History with any degree of thoughtfulness, we shall find that the checks and balances of Profit and Loss have never been the grand agents with man; that they have never been roused into deep, thorough, all-pervading efforts

by any computable prospect of Profit and Loss, for any visible, finite object; but always for some invisible and infinite one. The Crusades took their rise in Religion; their visible object was, commercially speaking, worth nothing. It was the boundless invisible world that was laid bare in the imaginations of those men; and in its burning light, the visible shrunk as a scroll. Not mechanical, nor produced by mechanical means, was this vast movement. No dining at Freemasons' Tavern, with the other long train of modern machinery; no cunning reconciliation of "vested interests," was required here: only the passionate voice of one man, the rapt soul looking through the eyes of one man; and rugged, steel-clad Europe trembled beneath his words, and followed him whither he listed. In later ages it was still the same. The Reformation had an invisible, mystic and ideal aim; the result was indeed to be embodied in external things; but its spirit, its worth, was internal, invisible, infinite. Our English Revolution too originated in Religion. Men did battle, in those old days, not for Purse-sake, but for Conscience-sake. Nay, in our own days, it is no way different. The French Revolution itself had something higher in it than cheap bread and a Habeas-corpus act. Here too was an Idea; a Dynamic, not a Mechanic force. It was a struggle, though a blind and at last an insane one, for the infinite, divine nature of Right, of Freedom, of Country.

Thus does man, in every age, vindicate, consciously or unconsciously, his celestial birthright. Thus does Nature hold on her wondrous, unquestionable course; and all our systems and theories are but so many froth-eddies or sand-banks, which from time to time she casts up, and washes away. When we can drain the Ocean into mill-ponds, and bottle up the Force of Gravity, to be sold by retail, in gas-jars; then may we hope to comprehend the infinitudes of man's soul under formulas of Profit and Loss; and rule over this too, as over a patent engine, by checks, and valves, and balances.

Nay, even with regard to Government itself, can it be necessary to remind any one that Freedom, without which indeed all spiritual life is impossible, depends on infinitely more complex influences than either the extension or the curtailment of the "democratic interest"? Who is there that, "taking the high *priori* road," shall point out what these influences are; what deep, subtle, inextricably en-

tangled influences they have been and may be? For man is not the creature and product of Mechanism; but, in a far truer sense, its creator and producer: it is the noble People that makes the noble Government; rather than conversely. On the whole, Institutions are much; but they are not all. The freest and highest spirits of the world have often been found under strange outward circumstances: Saint Paul and his brother Apostles were politically slaves; Epictetus was personally one. Again, forget the influences of Chivalry and Religion, and ask: What countries produced Columbus and Las Casas? Or, descending from virtue and heroism to mere energy and spiritual talent: Cortes, Pizarro, Alba, Ximenes? The Spaniards of the sixteenth century were indisputably the noblest nation of Europe; yet they had the Inquisition and Philip II. They have the same government at this day; and are the lowest nation. The Dutch too have retained their old constitution; but no Siege of Leyden, no William the Silent, not even an Egmont or De Witt any longer appears among them. With ourselves also, where much has changed, effect has nowise followed cause as it should have done: two centuries ago, the Commons Speaker addressed Queen Elizabeth on bended knees, happy that the virago's foot did not even smite him; yet the people were then governed, not by a Castlereagh, but by a Burghley; they had their Shakspeare and Philip Sidney, where we have our Sheridan Knowles and Beau Brummel.

These and the like facts are so familiar, the truths which they preach so obvious, and have in all past times been so universally believed and acted on, that we should almost feel ashamed for repeating them; were it not that, on every hand, the memory of them seems to have passed away, or at best died into a faint tradition, of no value as a practical principle. To judge by the loud clamour of our Constitution-builders, Statists, Economists, directors, creators, reformers of Public Societies; in a word, all manner of Mechanists, from the Cartwright up to the Code-maker; and by the nearly total silence of all Preachers and Teachers who should give a voice to Poetry, Religion and Morality, we might fancy either that man's Dynamical nature was, to all spiritual intents, extinct, or else so perfected that nothing more was to be made of it by the old means; and henceforth only in his Mechanical contrivances did any hope exist for him.

To define the limits of these two departments of man's activity, which work into one another, and by means of one another, so intricately and inseparably, were by its nature an impossible attempt. Their relative importance, even to the wisest mind, will vary in different times, according to the special wants and dispositions of those times. Meanwhile, it seems clear enough that only in the right coördination of the two, and the vigorous forwarding of both, does our true line of action lie. Undue cultivation of the inward or Dynamical province leads to idle, visionary, impracticable courses, and, especially in rude eras, to Superstition and Fanaticism, with their long train of baleful and well-known evils. Undue cultivation of the outward, again, though less immediately prejudicial, and even for the time productive of many palpable benefits, must, in the long-run, by destroying Moral Force, which is the parent of all other Force, prove not less certainly, and perhaps still more hopelessly, pernicious. This, we take it, is the grand characteristic of our age. By our skill in Mechanism, it has come to pass, that in the management of external things we excel all other ages ; while in whatever respects the pure moral nature, in true dignity of soul and character, we are perhaps inferior to most civilised ages.

In fact, if we look deeper, we shall find that this faith in Mechanism has now struck its roots down into man's most intimate, primary sources of conviction ; and is thence sending up, over his whole life and activity, innumerable stems,—fruit-bearing and poison-bearing. The truth is, men have lost their belief in the Invisible, and believe, and hope, and work only in the Visible ; or, to speak it in other words : This is not a Religious age. Only the material, the immediately practical, not the divine and spiritual, is important to us. The infinite, absolute character of Virtue has passed into a finite, conditional one ; it is no longer a worship of the Beautiful and Good ; but a calculation of the Profitable. Worship, indeed, in any sense, is not recognised among us, or is mechanically explained into Fear of pain, or Hope of pleasure. Our true Deity is Mechanism. It has subdued external Nature for us, and we think it will do all other things. We are Giants in physical power : in a deeper than metaphorical sense, we are Titans, that strive, by heaping mountain on mountain, to conquer Heaven also.

The strong Mechanical character, so visible in the spiritual pursuits and methods of this age, may be traced much farther into the condition and prevailing disposition of our spiritual nature itself. Consider, for example, the general fashion of Intellect in this era. Intellect, the power man has of knowing and believing, is now nearly synonymous with Logic, or the mere power of arranging and communicating. Its implement is not Meditation, but Argument. "Cause and effect" is almost the only category under which we look at, and work with, all Nature. Our first question with regard to any object is not, What is it? but, How is it? We are no longer instinctively driven to apprehend, and lay to heart, what is Good and Lovely, but rather to inquire, as onlookers, how it is produced, whence it comes, whither it goes. Our favourite Philosophers have no love and no hatred; they stand among us not to do, nor to create anything, but as a sort of Logic-mills to grind out the true causes and effects of all that is done and created. To the eye of a Smith, a Hume or a Constant, all is well that works quietly. An Order of Ignatius Loyola, a Presbyterianism of John Knox, a Wickliffe or a Henry the Eighth, are simply so many mechanical phenomena, caused or causing.

The *Euphuist* of our day differs much from his pleasant predecessors. An intellectual dapperling of these times boasts chiefly of his irresistible perspicacity, his "dwelling in the daylight of truth," and so forth; which, on examination, turns out to be a dwelling in the *rush*-light of "closet-logic," and a deep unconsciousness that there is any other light to dwell in or any other objects to survey with it. Wonder, indeed, is, on all hands, dying out: it is the sign of uncultivation to wonder. Speak to any small man of a high, majestic Reformation, of a high, majestic Luther; and forthwith he sets about "accounting" for it; how the "circumstances of the time" called for such a character, and found him, we suppose, standing girt and road-ready, to do its errand; how the "circumstances of the time" created, fashioned, floated him quietly along into the result; how, in short, this small man, had he been there, could have performed the like himself! For it is the "force of circumstances" that does everything; the force of one man can do nothing. Now all this is grounded on little more than a metaphor. We figure Society as a "Machine," and that mind is opposed to mind, as body is to body; whereby two,

or at most ten, little minds must be stronger than one great mind. Notable absurdity! For the plain truth, very plain, we think, is, that minds are opposed to minds in quite a different way; and *one* man that has a higher Wisdom, a hitherto unknown spiritual Truth in him, is stronger, not than some men that have it not; or than ten thousand, but than *all* men that have it not; and stands among them with a quite ethereal, angelic power, as with a sword out of Heaven's own armoury, sky-tempered, which no buckler, and no tower of brass, will finally withstand.

But to us, in these times, such considerations rarely occur. We enjoy, we see nothing by direct vision; but only by reflection, and in anatomical dismemberment. Like Sir Hudibras, for every Why we must have a Wherefore. We have our little *theory* on all human and divine things. Poetry, the workings of genius itself, which in all times, with one or another meaning, has been called Inspiration, and held to be mysterious and inscrutable, is no longer without its scientific exposition. The building of the lofty rhyme is like any other masonry or bricklaying: we have theories of its rise, height, decline and fall,—which latter, it would seem, is now near, among all people. Of our "Theories of Taste," as they are called, wherein the deep, infinite, unspeakable Love of Wisdom and Beauty, which dwells in all men, is "explained," made mechanically visible, from "Association" and the like, why should we say anything? Hume has written us a "Natural History of Religion"; in which one Natural History all the rest are included. Strangely too does the general feeling coincide with Hume's in this wonderful problem; for whether his "Natural History" be the right one or not, that Religion must have a Natural History, all of us, cleric and laic, seem to be agreed. He indeed regards it as a Disease, we again as Health; so far there is a difference; but in our first principle we are at one.

To what extent theological Unbelief, we mean intellectual dissent from the Church, in its view of Holy Writ, prevails at this day, would be a highly important, were it not, under any circumstances, an almost impossible inquiry. But the Unbelief, which is of a still more fundamental character, every man may see prevailing, with scarcely any but the faintest contradiction, all around him; even in the Pulpit itself. Religion in most countries, more or less in

every country, is no longer what it was, and should be,—a thousand-voiced psalm from the heart of Man to his invisible Father, the fountain of all Goodness, Beauty, Truth, and revealed in every revelation of these; but for the most part, a wise prudential feeling grounded on mere calculation; a matter, as all others now are, of Expediency and Utility; whereby some smaller quantum of earthly enjoyment may be exchanged for a far larger quantum of celestial enjoyment. Thus Religion too is Profit, a working for wages; not Reverence, but vulgar Hope or Fear. Many, we know, very many we hope, are still religious in a far different sense; were it not so, our case were too desperate: but to witness that such is the temper of the times, we take any calm observant man, who agrees or disagrees in our feeling on the matter, and ask him whether our *view* of it is not in general well-founded.

Literature too, if we consider it, gives similar testimony. At no former era has Literature, the printed communication of Thought, been of such importance as it is now. We often hear that the Church is in danger; and truly so it is,—in a danger it seems not to know of: for, with its tithes in the most perfect safety, its functions are becoming more and more superseded. The true Church of England, at this moment, lies in the Editors of its Newspapers. These preach to the people daily, weekly; admonishing kings themselves; advising peace or war, with an authority which only the first Reformers, and a long-past class of Popes, were possessed of; inflicting moral censure; imparting moral encouragement, consolation, edification; in all ways diligently "administering the Discipline of the Church." It may be said too, that in private disposition the new Preachers somewhat resemble the Mendicant Friars of old times: outwardly full of holy zeal; inwardly not without stratagem, and hunger for terrestrial things. But omitting this class, and the boundless host of watery personages who pipe, as they are able, on so many scrannel straws, let us look at the higher regions of Literature, where, if anywhere, the pure melodies of Poesy and Wisdom should be heard. Of natural talent there is no deficiency: one or two richly-endowed individuals even give us a superiority in this respect. But what is the song they sing? Is it a tone of the Memnon Statue, breathing music as the *light* first touches it? A "liquid wisdom," disclosing to our sense the deep, infinite harmonies of Nature and man's soul? Alas, no! It is not

a matin or vesper hymn to the Spirit of Beauty, but a fierce clashing of cymbals, and shouting of multitudes, as children pass through the fire to Moloch! Poetry itself has no eyes for the Invisible. Beauty is no longer the god it worships, but some brute image of Strength; which we may call an idol, for true Strength is one and the same with Beauty, and its worship also is a hymn. The meek, silent light can mould, create and purify all Nature; but the loud Whirlwind, the sign and product of Disunion, of Weakness, passes on, and is forgotten. How widely this veneration for the physically Strongest has spread itself through Literature, any one may judge who reads either criticism or poem. We praise a work, not as "true," but as "strong"; our highest praise is that it has "affected" us, has "terrified" us. All this, it has been well observed, is the "maximum of the Barbarous," the symptom, not of vigorous refinement, but of luxurious corruption. It speaks much, too, for men's indestructible love of truth, that nothing of this kind will abide with them; that even the talent of a Byron cannot permanently seduce us into idol-worship; that he too, with all his wild siren charming, already begins to be disregarded and forgotten.

Again, with respect to our Moral condition: here also he who runs may read that the same physical, mechanical influences are everywhere busy. For the "superior morality" of which we hear so much, we too would desire to be thankful: at the same time, it were but blindness to deny that this "superior morality" is properly rather an "inferior criminality," produced not by greater love of Virtue, but by greater perfection of Police; and of that far subtler and stronger Police, called Public Opinion. This last watches over us with its Argus eyes more keenly than ever; but the "inward eye" seems heavy with sleep. Of any belief in invisible, divine things, we find as few traces in our Morality as elsewhere. It is by tangible, material considerations that we are guided, not by inward and spiritual. Self-denial, the parent of all virtue, in any true sense of that word, has perhaps seldom been rarer: so rare is it, that the most, even in their abstract speculations, regard its existence as a chimera. Virtue is Pleasure, is Profit; no celestial, but an earthly thing. Virtuous men, Philanthropists, Martyrs are happy accidents; their "taste" lies the right way! In all senses, we worship and follow after Power; which may be called a physical pursuit.

No man now loves Truth, as Truth must be loved, with an infinite love; but only with a finite love, and as it were *par amours*. Nay, properly speaking, he does not *believe* and know it, but only "*thinks*" it, and that "there is every probability!" He preaches it aloud, and rushes courageously forth with it,—if there is a multitude huzzaing at his back; yet ever keeps looking over his shoulder, and the instant the huzzaing languishes, he too stops short.

In fact, what morality we have takes the shape of Ambition, of "Honour": beyond money and money's worth, our only rational blessedness is Popularity. It were but a fool's trick to die for conscience. Only for "character," by duel, or, in case of extremity, by suicide, is the wise man bound to die. By arguing on the "force of circumstances," we have argued away all force from ourselves; and stand leashed together, uniform in dress and movement, like the rowers of some boundless galley. This and that may be right and true; *but* we must not do it. Wonderful "Force of Public Opinion"! We must act and walk in all points as it prescribes; follow the traffic it bids us, realise the sum of money, the degree of "influence" it expects of us, *or* we shall be lightly esteemed; certain mouthfuls of articulate wind will be blown at us, and this what mortal courage can front? Thus, while civil liberty is more and more secured to us, our moral liberty is all but lost. Practically considered, our creed is Fatalism; and, free in hand and foot, we are shackled in heart and soul with far straighter than feudal chains. Truly may we say, with the Philosopher, "the deep meaning of the laws of Mechanism lies heavy on us"; and in the closet, in the market-place, in the temple, by the social hearth, encumbers the whole movements of our mind, and over our noblest faculties is spreading a nightmare sleep.

These dark features, we are aware, belong more or less to other ages, as well as to ours. This faith in Mechanism, in the all-importance of physical things, is in every age the common refuge of Weakness and blind Discontent; of all who believe, as many will ever do, that man's true good lies without him, not within. We are aware also, that, as applied to ourselves in all their aggravation, they form but half a picture; that in the whole picture there are bright lights as well as gloomy shadows. If we here dwell chiefly on the latter, let us not be blamed: it is in general more

profitable to reckon up our defects than to boast of our attainments.

Neither, with all these evils more or less clearly before us, have we at any time despaired of the fortunes of society. Despair, or even despondency, in that respect, appears to us, in all cases, a groundless feeling. We have a faith in the imperishable dignity of man; in the high vocation to which, throughout this his earthly history, he has been appointed. However it may be with individual nations, whatever melancholic speculators may assert, it seems a well-ascertained fact, that in all times, reckoning even from those of the Heraclides and Pelasgi, the happiness and greatness of mankind at large have been continually progressive. Doubtless this age also is advancing. Its very unrest, its ceaseless activity, its discontent contains matter of promise. Knowledge, education are opening the eyes of the humblest; are increasing the number of thinking minds without limit. This is as it should be; for not in turning back, not in resisting, but only in resolutely struggling forward, does our life consist.

Nay, after all, our spiritual maladies are but of Opinion; we are but fettered by chains of our own forging, and which ourselves also can rend asunder. This deep, paralysed subjection to physical objects comes not from Nature, but from our own unwise mode of *viewing* Nature. Neither can we understand that man wants, at this hour, any faculty of heart, soul or body, that ever belonged to him. "He, who has been born, has been a First Man;" has had lying before his young eyes, and as yet unhardened into scientific shapes, a world as plastic, infinite, divine, as lay before the eyes of Adam himself. If Mechanism, like some glass bell, encircles and imprisons us; if the soul looks forth on a fair heavenly country which it cannot reach, and pines, and in its scanty atmosphere is ready to perish,—yet the bell is but of glass; "one bold stroke to break the bell in pieces, and thou art delivered!" Not the invisible world is wanting, for it dwells in man's soul, and this last is still here. Are the solemn temples, in which the Divinity was once visibly revealed among us, crumbling away? We can repair them, we can rebuild them. The wisdom, the heroic worth of our forefathers, which we have lost, we can recover. That admiration of old nobleness, which now so often shows itself as a faint dilettantism, will one day become a generous emulation, and man may again be all that he

has been, and more than he has been. Nor are these the mere daydreams of fancy; they are clear possibilities; nay, in this time they are even assuming the character of hopes. Indications we do see in other countries and in our own, signs infinitely cheering to us, that Mechanism is not always to be our hard taskmaster, but one day to be our pliant, all-ministering servant; that a new and brighter spiritual era is slowly evolving itself for all men. But on these things our present course forbids us to enter.

Meanwhile, that great outward changes are in progress can be doubtful to no one. The time is sick and out of joint. Many things have reached their height; and it is a wise adage that tells us, "the darkest hour is nearest the dawn." Wherever we can gather indication of the public thought, whether from printed books, as in France or Germany, or from Carbonari rebellions and other political tumults, as in Spain, Portugal, Italy and Greece, the voice it utters is the same. The thinking minds of all nations call for change. There is a deep-lying struggle in the whole fabric of society; a boundless grinding collision of the New with the Old. The French Revolution, as is now visible enough, was not the parent of this mighty movement, but its offspring. Those two hostile influences, which always exist in human things, and on the constant intercommunion of which depends their health and safety, had lain in separate masses, accumulating through generations, and France was the scene of their fiercest explosion; but the final issue was not unfolded in that country: nay it is not yet anywhere unfolded. Political freedom is hitherto the object of these efforts; but they will not and cannot stop there. It is towards a higher freedom than mere freedom from oppression by his fellow-mortal, that man dimly aims. Of this higher, heavenly freedom, which is "man's reasonable service," all his noble institutions, his faithful endeavours and loftiest attainments, are but the body, and more and more approximated emblem.

On the whole, as this wondrous planet, Earth, is journeying with its fellows through infinite Space, so are the wondrous destinies embarked on it journeying through infinite Time, under a higher guidance than ours. For the present, as our astronomy informs us, its path lies towards *Hercules*, the constellation of *Physical Power*: but that is not our most pressing concern. Go where it will, the deep

HEAVEN will be around it. Therein let us have hope and sure faith. To reform a world, to reform a nation, no wise man will undertake ; and all but foolish men know, that the only solid, though a far slower reformation, is what each begins and perfects on *himself*.

BOSWELL'S LIFE OF JOHNSON

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[1832]

Æsop's Fly, sitting on the axle of the chariot, has been much laughed at for exclaiming: What a dust I do raise! Yet which of us, in his way, has not sometimes been guilty of the like? Nay, so foolish are men, they often, standing at ease and as spectators on the highway, will volunteer to exclaim of the Fly (not being tempted to it, as *he* was) exactly to the same purport: What a dust *thou* dost raise! Smallest of mortals, when mounted aloft by circumstances, come to seem great; smallest of phenomena connected with them are treated as important, and must be sedulously scanned, and commented upon with loud emphasis.

That Mr. Croker should undertake to edit *Boswell's Life of Johnson*, was a praiseworthy but no miraculous procedure: neither could the accomplishment of such undertaking be, in an epoch like ours, anywise regarded as an event in Universal History; the right or the wrong accomplishment thereof was, in very truth, one of the most insignificant of things. However, it sat in a great environment, on the axle of a high, fast-rolling, parliamentary chariot; and all the world has exclaimed over it, and the author of it: What a dust thou dost raise! List to the Reviews, and "Organs of Public Opinion," from the *National Omnibus* upwards: criticisms, vituperative and laudatory, stream from their thousand throats of brass and of leather; here chanting *Io-pæans*; there grating harsh thunder or vehement shrew-mouse squeaklets; till the general ear is filled, and nigh deafened. Boswell's Book had a noiseless birth, compared with this Edition of Boswell's Book. On the other hand, consider with what degree of tumult *Paradise Lost* and the *Iliad* were ushered in!

To swell such clamour, or prolong it beyond the time,

seems nowise our vocation here. At most, perhaps, we are bound to inform simple readers, with all possible brevity, what manner of performance and Edition this is ; especially, whether, in our poor judgment, it is worth laying out three pounds sterling upon, yea or not. The whole business belongs distinctly to the lower ranks of the trivial class.

Let us admit, then, with great readiness, that as Johnson once said, and the Editor repeats, "all works which describe manners require notes in sixty or seventy years, or less ; " that, accordingly, a new Edition of Boswell was desirable ; and that Mr. Croker has given one. For this task he had various qualifications : his own voluntary resolution to do it ; his high place in society, unlocking all manner of archives to him ; not less, perhaps, a certain anecdotico-biographic turn of mind, natural or acquired ; we mean, a love for the *minuter* events of History, and talent for investigating these. Let us admit too, that he has been very diligent ; seems to have made inquiries perseveringly far and near ; as well as drawn freely from his own ample stores ; and so tells us, to appearance quite accurately, much that he has not found lying on the highways, but has had to seek and dig for. Numerous persons, chiefly of quality, rise to view in these Notes ; when and also where they came into this world, received office or promotion, died and were buried (only what they *did*, except digest, remaining often too mysterious),—is faithfully enough set down. Whereby all that their various and doubtless widely-scattered Tombstones could have taught us, is here presented, at once, in a bound Book. Thus is an indubitable conquest, though a small one, gained over our great enemy, the all-destroyer Time ; and as such shall have welcome.

Nay, let us say that the spirit of Diligence, exhibited in this department, seems to attend the Editor honestly throughout : he keeps everywhere a watchful outlook on his Text ; reconciling the distant with the present, or at least indicating and regretting their irreconcilability ; elucidating, smoothing down ; in all ways exercising, according to ability, a strict editorial superintendence. Any little Latin or even Greek phrase is rendered into English, in general with perfect accuracy ; citations are verified, or else corrected. On all hands, moreover, there is a certain spirit of Decency maintained and insisted on : if not good morals, yet good manners, are rigidly incul-

cated; if not Religion, and a devout Christian heart, yet Orthodoxy, and a cleanly Shovel-hatted look,—which, as compared with flat Nothing, is something very considerable. Grant too, as no contemptible triumph of this latter spirit, that though the Editor is known as a decided Politician and Party-man, he has carefully subdued all temptations to transgress in that way: except by quite involuntary indications, and rather as it were the pervading temper of the whole, you could not discover on which side of the Political Warfare he is enlisted and fights. This, as we said, is a great triumph of the Decency-principle: for this, and for these other graces and performances, let the Editor have all praise.

Herewith, however, must the praise unfortunately terminate. Diligence, Fidelity, Decency, are good and indispensable: yet, without Faculty, without Light, they will not do the work. Along with that Tombstone-information, perhaps even without much of it, we could have liked to gain some answer, in one way or other, to this wide question: What and how was *English Life* in Johnson's time; wherein has ours grown to differ therefrom? In other words: What things have we to forget, what to fancy and remember, before we, from such distance, can put ourselves in Johnson's *place*; and so, in the full sense of the term, *understand* him, his sayings and his doings? This was indeed specially the problem which a Commentator and Editor had to solve: a complete solution of it should have lain in him, his whole mind should have been filled and prepared with perfect insight into it; then, whether in the way of express Dissertation, of incidental Exposition and Indication, opportunities enough would have occurred of bringing out the same: what was dark in the figure of the Past had thereby been enlightened; Boswell had, not in show and word only, but in very fact, been made *new* again, readable to us who are divided from him, even as he was to those close at hand. Of all which very little has been attempted here; accomplished, we should say, next to nothing, or altogether nothing.

Excuse, no doubt, is in readiness for such omission; and, indeed, for innumerable other failings;—as where, for example, the Editor will punctually explain what is already sun-clear; and then anon, not without frankness, declare frequently enough that "the Editor does not understand," that "the Editor cannot guess,"—while, for most part, the

Reader cannot help both guessing and seeing. Thus, if Johnson say, in one sentence, that "English names should not be used in Latin verses;" and then, in the next sentence, speak blamingly of "Carteret being used as a dactyl," will the generality of mortals detect any puzzle there? Or again, where poor Boswell writes: "I always remember a remark made to me by a Turkish lady, educated in France: '*Ma foi, monsieur, notre bonheur dépend de la façon que notre sang circule*;'"—though the Turkish lady here speaks English-French, where is the call for a Note like this: "Mr. Boswell no doubt fancied these words had some meaning, or he would hardly have quoted them: but what that meaning is, the Editor cannot guess"? The Editor is clearly no witch at a riddle.—For these and all kindred deficiencies the excuse, as we said, is at hand; but the fact of their existence is not the less certain and regrettable.

Indeed it, from a very early stage of the business, becomes afflictively apparent, how much the Editor, so well furnished with all external appliances and means, is from within unfurnished with means for forming to himself any just notion of Johnson, or of Johnson's Life; and therefore of speaking on that subject with much hope of edifying. Too lightly is it from the first taken for granted that *Hunger*, the great basis of our life, is also its apex and ultimate perfection; that as "Neediness and Greediness and Vainglory" are the chief qualities of most men, so no man, not even a Johnson, acts or can think of acting on any other principle. Whatsoever, therefore, cannot be referred to the two former categories (Need and Greed), is without scruple ranged under the latter. It is here properly that our Editor becomes burdensome; and, to the weaker sort, even a nuisance. "What good is it," will such cry, "when we had still some faint shadow of belief that man was better than a selfish Digesting-machine, what good is it to poke in, at every turn, and explain how this and that which we thought noble in old Samuel, was vulgar, base; that for him too there was no reality but in the Stomach; and except Pudding, and the finer species of pudding which is named Praise, life had no pabulum? Why, for instance, when we know that Johnson *loved* his good Wife, and says expressly that their marriage was 'a love-match on both sides,'—should two closed lips open to tell us only this: 'Is it not possible that the obvious

advantage of having a woman of experience to superintend an establishment of this kind (the Edial School) may have contributed to a match so disproportionate in point of age ? —Ed.' ? Or again when, in the Text, the honest cynic speaks freely of his former poverty, and it is known that he once lived on fourpence-halfpenny a day,—need a Commentator advance, and comment thus : 'When we find Dr. Johnson tell unpleasant truths to, or of, other men, let us recollect that he does not appear to have spared himself, on occasions in which he might be forgiven for doing so' ? Why in short," continues the exasperated Reader, "should Notes of this species stand affronting me, when there might have been no Note at all ?"—Gentle Reader, we answer, Be not wroth. What other could an honest Commentator do, than give thee the best he had ? Such was the picture and theorem he had fashioned for himself of the world and of man's doings therein : take it, and draw wise inferences from it. If there did exist a Leader of Public Opinion, and Champion of Orthodoxy in the Church of Jesus of Nazareth, who reckoned that man's glory consisted in not being poor ; and that a Sage, and Prophet of his time, must needs blush because the world had paid him at that easy rate of fourpence-halfpenny *per diem*—was not the fact of such existence worth knowing, worth considering ?

Of a much milder hue, yet to us practically of an all-defacing, and for the present enterprise quite ruinous character,—is another grand fundamental failing ; the last we shall feel ourselves obliged to take the pain of specifying here. It is, that our Editor has fatally, and almost surprisingly, mistaken the limits of an Editor's function ; and so, instead of working on the margin with his Pen, to elucidate as best might be, strikes boldly into the body of the page with his Scissors, and there clips at discretion ! Four Books Mr. C. had by him, wherefrom to gather light for the fifth, which was Boswell's. What does he do but now, in the placidest manner,—slit the whole five into slips, and sew these together into a *sextum quid*, exactly at his own convenience ; giving Boswell the credit of the whole ! By what art-magic, our readers ask, has he united them ? By the simplest of all : by Brackets. Never before was the full virtue of the Bracket made manifest. You begin a sentence under Boswell's guidance, thinking to be carried happily through it by the same : but no ; in the middle, perhaps after your semicolon, and some

consequent "for,"—starts up one of these Bracket-ligatures, and stitches you in from half a page to twenty or thirty pages of a Hawkins, Tyers, Murphy, Piozzi; so that often one must make the old sad reflection, Where we are, we know; whither we are going, no man knoweth! It is truly said also, There is much between the cup and the lip; but here the case is still sadder; for not till after consideration can you ascertain, now when the cup is *at* the lip, what liquor it is you are imbibing; whether Boswell's French wine which you began with, or some Piozzi's ginger-beer, or Hawkins's entire, or perhaps some other great Brewer's penny-swipes or even alegar, which has been surreptitiously substituted instead thereof. A situation almost original; not to be tried a second time! But, in fine, what ideas Mr. Croker entertains of a literary *whole* and the thing called *Book*, and how the very Printer's Devils did not rise in mutiny against such a conglomeration as this, and refuse to print it,—may remain a problem.

And now happily our say is said. All faults, the Moralists tell us, are properly *shortcomings*; crimes themselves are nothing other than a *not doing enough*; *a fighting*, but with defective vigour. How much more a mere insufficiency, and this after good efforts, in handicraft practice! Mr. Croker says: "The worst that can happen is that all the present Editor has contributed may, if the reader so pleases, be rejected as *surplusage*." It is our pleasant duty to take with hearty welcome what he has given; and render thanks even for what he meant to give. Next and finally, it is our painful duty to declare, aloud, if that be necessary, that his gift, as weighed against the hard money which the Booksellers demand for giving it you, is (in our judgment) very greatly the lighter. No portion, accordingly, of our small floating capital has been embarked in the business, or shall ever be; indeed, were we in the market for such a thing, there is simply *no* Edition of *Boswell* to which this last would seem preferable. And now enough, and more than enough!

We have next a word to say of James Boswell. Boswell has already been much commented upon; but rather in the way of censure and vituperation than of true recognition. He was a man that brought himself much before the world; confessed that he eagerly coveted fame, or if that were not possible, notoriety; of which latter as he

gained far more than seemed his due, the public were incited, not only by their natural love of scandal, but by a special ground of envy, to say whatever ill of him could be said. Out of the fifteen millions that then lived, and had bed and board, in the British Islands, this man has provided us a greater *pleasure* than any other individual, at whose cost we now enjoy ourselves; perhaps has done us a greater *service* than can be specially attributed to more than two or three: yet, ungrateful that we are, no written or spoken eulogy of James Boswell anywhere exists; his recompense in solid pudding (so far as copyright went) was not excessive; and as for the empty praise, it has altogether been denied him. Men are unwiser than children; they do *not* know the hand that feeds them.

Boswell was a person whose mean or bad qualities lay open to the general eye; visible, palpable to the dullest. His good qualities, again, belonged not to the Time he lived in; were far from common then; indeed, in such a degree, were almost unexampled; not recognizable therefore by every one; nay, apt even (so strange had they grown) to be confounded with the very vices they lay contiguous to, and had sprung out of. That he was a wine-bibber and gross liver; gluttonously fond of whatever would yield him a little solacement, were it only of a stomachic character, is undeniable enough. That he was vain, heedless, a babbler; had much of the sycophant, alternating with the braggadocio, curiously spiced too with an all-pervading dash of the coxcomb; that he gloried much when the Tailor, by a court-suit, had made a new man of him; that he appeared at the Shakspeare Jubilee with a riband, imprinted "CORSICA BOSWELL," round his hat; and in short, if you will, lived no day of his life without doing and saying more than one pretentious ineptitude: all this unhappily is evident as the sun at noon. The very look of Boswell seems to have signified so much. In that cocked nose, cocked partly in triumph over his weaker fellow-creatures, partly to snuff-up the smell of coming pleasure, and scent it from afar; in those bag-cheeks, hanging like half-filled wine-skins, still able to contain more; in that coarsely-protruded shelf-mouth, that fat dewlapped chin; in all this, who sees not sensuality, pretension, boisterous imbecility enough; much that could not have been ornamental in the temper of a great man's overfed great man (what the Scotch name *flunky*), though

it had been more natural there? The under part of Boswell's face is of a low, almost brutish character.

Unfortunately, on the other hand, what great and genuine good lay in him was nowise so self-evident. That Boswell was a hunter after spiritual Notabilities, that he loved such, and longed, and even crept and crawled to be near them; that he first (in old Touchwood Auchinleck's phraseology) "took on with Paoli;" and then being off with "the Corsican landlouper," took on with a schoolmaster, "ane that keeped a schule, and ca'd it an academy:" that he did all this, and could not help doing it, we account a very singular merit. The man, once for all, had an "open sense," an open loving heart, which so few have; where Excellence existed, he was compelled to acknowledge it; was drawn towards it, and (let the old sulphur-brand of a Laird say what he liked) *could not but* walk with it,—if not as superior, if not as equal, then as inferior and lackey, better so than not at all. If we reflect now that his love of Excellence had not only such an evil *nature* to triumph over; but also what an *education* and social position withstood it and weighed it down, its innate strength, victorious over all these things, may astonish us. Consider what an inward impulse there must have been, how many mountains of impediment hurled aside, before the Scottish Laird could, as humble servant, embrace the knees (the bosom was not permitted him) of the English Dominie! Your Scottish Laird, says an English naturalist of these days, may be defined as the hungriest and vainest of all bipeds yet known. Boswell too was a Tory; of quite peculiarly feudal, genealogical, pragmatical temper; had been nurtured in an atmosphere of Heraldry, at the feet of a very Gamaliel in that kind; within bare walls, adorned only with pedigrees, amid serving-men in threadbare livery; all things teaching him, from birth upwards, to remember that a Laird was a Laird. Perhaps there was a special vanity in his very blood: old Auchinleck had, if not the gay, tail-spreading, peacock vanity of his son, no little of the slow-stalking, contentious, hissing vanity of the gander; a still more fatal species. Scottish Advocates will yet tell you how the ancient man, having chanced to be the first sheriff appointed (after the abolition of "hereditary jurisdictions") by royal authority, was wont, in dull-snuffing pompous tone, to preface many a deliverance from the bench with these words: "I, the first King's Sheriff in Scotland."

And now behold the worthy Bozzy, so prepossessed and held back by nature and by art, fly nevertheless like iron to its magnet, whither his better genius called! You may surround the iron and the magnet with what enclosures and encumbrances you please,—with wood, with rubbish, with brass: it matters not, the two feel each other, they struggle restlessly towards each other, they *will* be together. The iron may be a Scottish squirelet, full of gulosity and "gigmanity;" * the magnet an English plebeian, and moving rag-and-dust mountain, coarse, proud, irascible, imperious: nevertheless, behold how they embrace, and inseparably cleave to one another! It is one of the strangest phenomena of the past century, that at a time when the old reverent feeling of Discipleship (such as brought men from far countries, with rich gifts, and prostrate soul, to the feet of the Prophets) had passed utterly away from men's practical experience, and was no longer surmised to exist (as it does), perennial, indestructible, in man's inmost heart,—James Boswell should have been the individual, of all others, predestined to recall it, in such singular guise, to the wondering, and, for a long while, laughing and unrecognizing world. It has been commonly said, The man's vulgar vanity was all that attached him to Johnson; he delighted to be seen near him, to be thought connected with him. Now let it be at once granted that no consideration springing out of vulgar vanity could well be absent from the mind of James Boswell, in this his intercourse with Johnson, or in any considerable transaction of his life. At the same time, ask yourself: Whether such vanity, and nothing else, actuated him therein; whether this was the true essence and moving principle of the phenomenon, or not rather its outward vesture, and the accidental environment (and defacement) in which it came to light? The man was, by nature and habit, vain; a sycophant-coxcomb, be it granted: but had there been nothing more than vanity in him, was Samuel Johnson the man of men to whom he must attach himself? At the date when Johnson was a poor rusty-coated "scholar," dwelling in Temple-lane, and indeed throughout their whole intercourse afterwards, were there not

* "*Q.* What do you mean by 'respectable'?—*A.* He always kept a gig." (*Thurtell's Trial.*)—"Thus," it has been said, "does society naturally divide itself into four classes: Noblemen, Gentlemen, Gigmen and Men."

chancellors and prime ministers enough; graceful gentlemen, the glass of fashion; honour-giving noblemen; dinner-giving rich men; renowned fire-eaters, swordsmen, gownsmen; Quacks and Realities of all hues,—any one of whom bulked much larger in the world's eye than Johnson ever did? To any one of whom, by half that submissiveness and assiduity, our Bozzy might have recommended himself; and sat there, the envy of surrounding lick-spittles; pocketing now solid emolument, swallowing now well-cooked viands and wines of rich vintage; in each case, also, shone-on by some glittering reflex of Renown or Notoriety, so as to be the observed of innumerable observers. To no one of whom, however, though otherwise a most diligent solicitor and purveyor, did he so attach himself: such vulgar courtierships were his paid drudgery, or leisure amusement; the worship of Johnson was his grand, ideal, voluntary business. Does not the frothy-hearted, yet enthusiastic man, doffing his Advocate's-wig, regularly take post, and hurry up to London, for the sake of his Sage chiefly; as to a Feast of Tabernacles, the Sabbath of his whole year? The plate-licker and wine-bibber dives into Bolt Court, to sip muddy coffee with a cynical old man, and a sour-tempered blind old woman (feeling the cups, whether they are full, with her finger); and patiently endures contradictions without end; too happy so he may but be allowed to listen and live. Nay, it does not appear that vulgar vanity could ever have been much flattered by Boswell's relation to Johnson. Mr. Croker says, Johnson was, to the last, little regarded by the great world; from which, for a vulgar vanity, all honour, as from its fountain, descends. Bozzy, even among Johnson's friends and special admirers, seems rather to have been laughed at than envied: his officious, whisking, consequential ways, the daily reproofs and rebuffs he underwent, could gain from the world no golden but only leaden opinions. His devout Discipleship seemed nothing more than a mean Spanielship, in the general eye. His mighty "constellation," or sun, round whom he, as satellite, observantly gyrated, was, for the mass of men, but a huge ill-snuffed tallow-light, and he a weak night-moth, circling foolishly, dangerously about it, not knowing what he wanted. If he enjoyed Highland dinners and toasts, as henchmen to a new sort of chieftain, Henry Erskine, in the domestic "Outer-House," could hand him a shilling "for the sight

of his Bear." Doubtless the man was laughed at, and often heard himself laughed at for his Johnsonism. To be envied is the grand and sole aim of vulgar vanity; to be filled with good things is that of sensuality: for Johnson perhaps no man living *envied* poor Bozzy; and of good things (except himself paid for them) there was no vestige in that acquaintanceship. Had nothing other or better than vanity and sensuality been there, Johnson and Boswell had never come together, or had soon and finally separated again.

In fact, the so copious terrestrial dross that welters chaotically, as the outer sphere of this man's character, does but render for us more remarkable, more touching, the celestial spark of goodness, of light, and Reverence for Wisdom, which dwelt in the interior, and could struggle through such encumbrances, and in some degree illuminate and beautify them. There is much lying yet undeveloped in the love of Boswell for Johnson. A cheering proof, in a time which else utterly wanted and still wants such, that living Wisdom is quite *infinitely* precious to man, is the symbol of the Godlike to him, which even weak eyes may discern; that Loyalty, Discipleship, all that was ever meant by *Hero-worship*, lives perennially in the human bosom, and waits, even in these dead days, only for occasions to unfold it, and inspire all men with it, and again make the world alive! James Boswell we can regard as a practical witness, or real *martyr*, to this high everlasting truth. A wonderful martyr, if you will; and in a time which made such martyrdom doubly wonderful: yet the time and its martyr perhaps suited each other. For a decrepit, death-sick Era, when CANT had first decisively opened her poison-breathing lips to proclaim that God-worship and Mammon-worship were one and the same, that Life was a *Lie*, and the Earth Beelzebub's, which the *Supreme Quack* should inherit; and so all things were fallen into the yellow leaf, and fast hastening to noisome corruption: for such an Era, perhaps no better Prophet than a parti-coloured Zany-Prophet, concealing, from himself and others, his prophetic significance in such unexpected vestures,—was deserved, or would have been in place. A precious medicine lay hidden in floods of coarsest, most composite treacle: the world swallowed the treacle, for it suited the world's palate; and now, after half a century, may the medicine also begin to show itself!

James Boswell belonged, in his corruptible part, to the lowest classes of mankind; a foolish, inflated creature, swimming in an element of self-conceit: but in his corruptible there dwelt an incorruptible, all the more impressive and indubitable for the strange lodging it had taken.

Consider too, with what force, diligence and vivacity he has rendered back all this which, in Johnson's neighbourhood, his "open sense" had so eagerly and freely taken in. That loose-flowing, careless-looking Work of his is as a picture by one of Nature's own Artists; the best possible resemblance of a Reality; like the very image thereof in a clear mirror. Which indeed it was: let but the mirror be *clear*, this is the great point; the picture must and will be genuine. How the babbling Bozzy, inspired only by love, and the recognition and vision which love can lend, epitomizes nightly the words of Wisdom, the deeds and aspects of Wisdom, and so, by little and little, unconsciously works together for us a whole *Johnsoniad*; a more free, perfect, sunlit and spirit-speaking likeness than for many centuries had been drawn by man of man! Scarcely since the days of Homer has the feat been equalled; indeed, in many senses, this also is a kind of Heroic Poem. The fit *Odyssey* of our unheroic age was to be written, not sung; of a Thinker, not of a Fighter; and (for want of a Homer) by the first open soul that might offer,—looked such even through the organs of a Boswell. We do the man's intellectual endowment great wrong, if we measure it by its mere logical outcome; though here too, there is not wanting a light ingenuity, a figurativeness and fanciful sport, with glimpses of insight far deeper than the common. But Boswell's grand intellectual talent was, as such ever is, an *unconscious* one, of far higher reach and significance than Logic; and showed itself in the whole, not in parts. Here again we have that old saying verified, "The heart sees farther than the head."

Thus does poor Bozzy stand out to us as an ill-assorted, glaring mixture of the highest and the lowest. What, indeed, is man's life generally but a kind of beast-godhood; the god in us triumphing more and more over the beast; striving more and more to subdue it under his feet? Did not the Ancients, in their wise, perennially-significant way, figure Nature itself, their sacred ALL, or PAN, as a portentous commingling of these two discords; as musical, humane, oracular in its upper part, yet ending below in the cloven

hairy feet of a goat? The union of melodious, celestial Freewill and Reason with foul Irrationality and Lust; in which, nevertheless, dwelt a mysterious unspeakable Fear and half-mad *panic* Awe; as for mortals there well might! And is not man a microcosm, or epitomized mirror of that same Universe; or rather, is not that Universe even Himself, the reflex of his own fearful and wonderful being, "the waste fantasy of his own dream"? No wonder that man, that each man, and James Boswell like the others, should resemble it! The peculiarity in his case was the unusual defect of amalgamation and subordination: the highest lay side by side with the lowest; not morally combined with it and spiritually transfiguring it, but tumbling in half-mechanical juxtaposition with it, and from time to time, as the mad alternation chanced, irradiating it, or eclipsed by it.

The world, as we said, has been but unjust to him; discerning only the outer terrestrial and often sordid mass; without eye, as it generally is, for his inner divine secret; and thus figuring him nowise as a god Pan, but simply of the bestial species, like the cattle on a thousand hills. Nay, sometimes a strange enough hypothesis has been started of him; as if it were in virtue even of these same bad qualities that he did his good work; as if it were the very fact of his being among the worst men in this world that had enabled him to write one of the best books therein! Falser hypothesis, we may venture to say, never rose in human soul. *Bad* is by its nature negative, and can do *nothing*; whatsoever enabled us to *do* anything is by its very nature *good*. Alas, that there should be teachers in Israel, or even learners, to whom this world-ancient fact is still problematical or even deniable! Boswell wrote a good Book because he had a heart and an eye to discern Wisdom, and an utterance to render it forth; because of his free insight, his lively talent, above all, of his Love and childlike Open-mindedness. His sneaking sycophancies, his greediness and forwardness, whatever was bestial and earthy in him, are so many blemishes in his Book, which still disturb us in its clearness; wholly hindrances, not helps. Towards Johnson, however, his feeling was not Sycophancy, which is the lowest, but Reverence, which is the highest of human feelings. None but a *reverent* man (which so unspeakably few are) could have found his way from Boswell's environment to Johnson's: if such worship for real God-made superiors showed itself also as worship for apparent Tailor-made superiors,

even as hollow interested mouth-worship for such,—the case, in this composite human nature of ours, was not miraculous, the more was the pity! But for ourselves, let every one of us cling to this last article of Faith, and know it as the beginning of all knowledge worth the name: That neither James Boswell's good Book, nor any other good thing, in any time or in any place, was, is or can be performed by any man in virtue of his *badness*, but always and solely in spite thereof.

As for the Book itself, questionless the universal favour entertained for it is well merited. In worth as a Book we have rated it beyond any other product of the eighteenth century: all Johnson's own Writings, laborious and in their kind genuine above most, stand on a quite inferior level to it; already, indeed, they are becoming obsolete for this generation; and for some future generation may be valuable chiefly as Prolegomena and expository Scholia to this *Johnsoniad* of Boswell. Which of us remembers, as one of the sunny spots of his existence, the day when he opened these airy volumes, fascinating him by a true natural magic! It was as if the curtains of the past were drawn aside, and we looked mysteriously into a kindred country, where dwelt our Fathers; inexpressibly dear to us, but which had seemed forever hidden from our eyes. For the dead Night had engulfed it; all was gone, vanished as if it had not been. Nevertheless, wondrously given back to us, there once more it lay; all bright, lucid, blooming; a little island of Creation amid the circumambient Void. There it still lies; like a thing stationary, imperishable, over which changeful Time were now accumulating itself in vain, and could not, any longer, harm it, or hide it.

If we examine by what charm it is that men are still held to this *Life of Johnson*, now when so much else has been forgotten, the main part of the answer will perhaps be found in that speculation "on the import of *Reality*," communicated to the world, last month, in this Magazine. The *Johnsoniad* of Boswell turns on objects that in very deed existed; it is all *true*. So far other in melodiousness of tone, it vies with the *Odyssey*, or surpasses it, in this one point: to us these read pages, as those chanted hexameters were to the first Greek hearers, are, in the fullest deepest sense, wholly *credible*. All the wit and wisdom lying embalmed in Boswell's Book, plenteous as these are, could not have saved it. Far more scientific *instruction* (mere excitement and en-

lightenment of the *thinking power*) can be found in twenty other works of that time, which make but a quite secondary impression on us. The other works of that time, however, fall under one of two classes: Either they are professedly Didactic; and, in that way, mere Abstractions, Philosophic Diagrams, incapable of interesting us much otherwise than as *Euclid's Elements* may do: Or else, with all their vivacity, and pictorial richness of colour, *they are Fictions and not Realities*. Deep truly, as Herr Sauerteig urges, is the force of this consideration: the thing here stated is a fact; those figures, that local habitation, are not shadow but substance. In virtue of such advantages, see how a very Boswell may become Poetical!

Critics insist much on the Poet that he should communicate an "Infinitude" to his delineation; that by intensity of conception, by that gift of "transcendental Thought," which is fitly named *genius*, and inspiration, he should *inform* the Finite with a certain Infinitude of significance; or as they sometimes say, ennoble the Actual into Idealness. They are right in their Precept; they mean rightly. But in cases like this of the *Johnsoniad*, such is the dark grandeur of that "Time element," wherein man's soul here below lives imprisoned,—the Poet's task is, as it were, done to his hand: Time itself, which is the outer veil of Eternity, invests, of its own accord, with an authentic, felt "infinitude" whatsoever it has once embraced in its mysterious folds. Consider all that lies in that one word *Past!* What a pathetic, sacred, in every sense *poetic*, meaning is implied in it; a meaning growing ever the clearer, the farther we recede in Time,—the *more* of that same Past we have to look through! —On which ground indeed must Sauerteig have built, and not without plausibility, in that strange thesis of his: "That History, after all, is the true Poetry; that Reality, if rightly interpreted, is grander than Fiction; nay that even in the right interpretation of Reality and History does genuine Poetry consist."

Thus for *Boswell's Life of Johnson* has Time done, is Time still doing, what no ornament of Art or Artifice could have done for it. Rough Samuel and sleek wheedling James *were*, and *are not*. Their Life and whole personal Environment has melted into air. The Mitre Tavern still stands in Fleet Street: but where now is its scot-and-lot paying, beef-and-ale loving, cocked-hatted, pot-bellied Landlord; its rosy-faced assiduous Landlady, with all her shining brass-

pans, waxed tables, well-filled larder-shelves; her cooks, and bootjacks, and errand-boys, and watery-mouthed hangers-on? Gone! Gone! The becking Waiter who, with wreathed smiles, was wont to spread for Samuel and Bozzy their supper of the gods, has long since pocketed his last sixpence; and vanished, sixpences and all, like a ghost at cock-crowing. The Bottles they drank out of are all broken, the Chairs they sat on all rotted and burnt; the very Knives and Forks they ate with have rusted to the heart, and become brown oxide of iron, and mingled with the indiscriminate clay. All, all has vanished; in every deed and truth, like that baseless fabric of Prospero's air-vision. Of the Mitre Tavern nothing but the bare walls remain there: of London, of England, of the World, nothing but the bare walls remain; and these also decaying (were they of adamant), only slower. The mysterious River of Existence rushes on: a new Billow thereof has arrived, and lashes wildly as ever round the old embankments; but the former Billow with *its* loud, mad eddyings, where is it?—Where!—Now this Book of Boswell's, this is precisely a revocation of the edict of Destiny; so that Time shall not utterly, not so soon by several centuries, have dominion over us. A little row of Naphtha-lamps, with its line of Naphtha-light, burns clear and holy through the dead Night of the Past: they who are gone are still here; though hidden they are revealed, though dead they yet speak. There it shines, that little miraculously lamplit Pathway; shedding its feebler and feebler twilight into the boundless dark Oblivion,—for all that our Johnson *touched* has become illuminated for us: on which miraculous little Pathway we can still travel, and see wonders.

It is not speaking with exaggeration, but with strict measured sobriety, to say that this Book of Boswell's will give us more real insight into the *History of England* during those days than twenty other Books, falsely entitled "Histories," which take to themselves that special aim. What good is it to me though innumerable Smolletts and Belshams keep dinning in my ears that a man named George the Third was born and bred up, and a man named George the Second died; that Walpole, and the Pelhams, and Chatham, and Rockingham, and Shelburne, and North, with their Coalition or their Separation Ministries, all ousted one another; and vehemently scrambled for "the thing they called the Rudder of Government, but which was in reality

the Spigot of Taxation" ? That debates were held, and infinite jarring and jargoning took place ; and road-bills and enclosure-bills, and game-bills and India-bills, and Laws which no man can number, which happily few men needed to trouble their heads with beyond the passing moment, were enacted, and printed by the King's Stationer ? That he who sat in Chancery, and rayed-out speculation from the Woolsack, was now a man that squinted, now a man that did not squint ? To the hungry and thirsty mind all this avails next to nothing. These men and these things, we indeed know, did swim, by strength or by specific levity, as apples or as horse-dung, on the top of the current : but it is by painfully noting the courses, eddyings and bobbings hither and thither of such drift-articles, that you will unfold to me the nature of the current itself ; of that mighty-rolling, loud-roaring Life-current, bottomless as the foundations of the Universe, mysterious as its Author ? The thing I want to see is not Redbook Lists, and Court Calendars, and Parliamentary thought, but the LIFE OF MAN in England : what men did, thought, suffered, enjoyed ; the form, especially the spirit, of their terrestrial existence, its outward environment, its inward principle ; *how* and *what* it was ; whence it proceeded, whither it was tending.

Mournful, in truth, is it to behold what the business called "History," in these so enlightened and illuminated times, still continues to be. Can you gather from it, read till your eyes go out, any dimmest shadow of an answer to that great question : How men lived and had their being ; were it but economically, as, what wages they got, and what they bought with these ? Unhappily you cannot. History will throw no light on any such matter. At the point where living memory fails, it is all darkness ; Mr. Senior and Mr. Sadler must still debate this simplest of all elements in the condition of the Past : Whether men were better off, in their mere larders and pantries, or were worse off than now ! History, as it stands all bound up in gilt volumes, is but a shade more instructive than the wooden volumes of a Backgammon-board. How my Prime Minister was appointed is of less moment to me than How my House Servant was hired. In these days, ten ordinary Histories of Kings and Courtiers were well exchanged against the tenth part of one good History of Booksellers.

For example, I would fain know the History of Scotland : who can tell it me ? "Robertson," say innumerable voices ;

"Robertson against the world." I open Robertson; and find there, through long ages too confused for narrative, and fit only to be presented in the way of epitome and distilled essence, a cunning answer and hypothesis, not to this question: By whom, and by what means, when and how, was this fair broad Scotland, with its Arts and Manufactures, Temples, Schools, Institutions, Poetry, Spirit, National Character, created, and made arable, verdant, peculiar, great, here as I can see some fair section of it lying, kind and strong (like some Bacchus-tamed Lion), from the Castle-hill of Edinburgh?—but to this other question: How did the King keep himself alive in those old days; and restrain so many Butcher-Barons and ravenous Henchmen from utterly extirpating one another, so that killing went on in some sort of moderation? In the one little Letter of Æneas Sylvius, from old Scotland, there is more of History than in all this. —At length, however, we come to a luminous age, interesting enough; to the age of the Reformation. All Scotland is awakened to a second higher life: the Spirit of the Highest stirs in every bosom, agitates every bosom; Scotland is convulsed, fermenting, struggling to body itself forth anew. To the herdsman, among his cattle in remote woods; to the craftsman, in his rude, heath-thatched workshop, among his rude guild-brethren; to the great and to the little, a new light has arisen: in town and hamlet groups are gathered, with eloquent looks, and governed or ungovernable tongues; the great and the little go forth together to do battle for the Lord against the mighty. We ask, with breathless eagerness: How was it; how went it on? Let us understand it, let us see it, and know it!— In reply, is handed us a really graceful and most dainty little Scandalous Chronicle (as for some Journal of Fashion) of two persons: Mary Stuart, a Beauty, but over lightheaded; and Henry Darnley, a Booby who had fine legs. How these first courted, billed and cooed, according to nature; then pouted, fretted, grew utterly enraged, and blew one another up with gunpowder: this, and not the History of Scotland, is what we good-naturedly read. Nay, by other hands, something like a horse-load of other Books have been written to prove that it was the Beauty who blew up the Booby, and that it was not she. Who or what it was, the thing once for all *being* so effectually done, concerns us little. To know Scotland, at that great epoch, were a valuable increase of knowledge: to know poor Darnley, and see him

with burning candle, from centre to skin, were no increase of knowledge at all.—Thus is History written.

Hence, indeed, comes it that History, which should be "the essence of innumerable Biographies," will tell us, question it as we like, less than one genuine Biography may do, pleasantly and of its own accord! The time is approaching when History will be attempted on quite other principles; when the Court, the Senate and the Battlefield, receding more and more into the background, the Temple, the Workshop and Social Hearth will advance more and more into the foreground; and History will not content itself with shaping some answer to that question: How were men *taxed* and *kept quiet* then? but will seek to answer this other infinitely wider and higher question: How and what *were men* then? Not our Government only, or the "*House* wherein our life was led," but the *Life* itself we led there, will be inquired into. Of which latter it may be found that Government, in any modern sense of the word, is after all but a secondary condition: in the mere sense of *Taxation* and *Keeping quiet*, a small, almost a pitiful one.—Meanwhile let us welcome such Boswells, each in his degree, as bring us any genuine contribution, were it never so inadequate, so inconsiderable.

An exception was early taken against this *Life of Johnson*, and all similar enterprises, which we here recommend; and has been transmitted from critic to critic, and repeated in their several dialects, uninterruptedly, ever since: That such jottings-down of careless conversation are an infringement of social privacy; a crime against our highest Freedom, the Freedom of man's intercourse with man. To this accusation, which we have read and heard oftener than enough, might it not be well for once to offer the flattest contradiction and plea of *Not at all guilty*? Not that conversation is noted down, but that conversation should not deserve noting down, is the evil. Doubtless, if conversation be falsely recorded, then is it simply a Lie; and worthy of being swept, with all dispatch, to the Father of Lies. But if, on the other hand, conversation can be authentically recorded, and any one is ready for the task, let him by all means proceed with it; let conversation be kept in remembrance to the latest date possible. Nay, should the consciousness that a man may be among us "taking notes" tend, in any measure, to restrict those floods of idle insincere *speech*, with which the *thought* of mankind is wellnigh drowned,—were it other than the most indubitable benefit? He who speaks honestly

cares not, needs not care, though his words be preserved to remotest time: for him who speaks *dis*honestly, the fittest of all punishments seems to be this same, which the nature of the case provides. The dishonest speaker, not he only who purposely utters falsehoods, but he who does not purposely, and with sincere heart, utter Truth, and Truth alone; who babbles he knows not what, and has clapped no bridle on his tongue, but lets it run racket, ejecting chatter and futility,—is among the most indisputable malefactors omitted, or inserted, in the Criminal Calendar. To him that will well consider it, idle speaking is precisely the beginning of all Hollowness, Halfness, *Infidelity* (want of Faithfulness); the genial atmosphere in which rank weeds of every kind attain the mastery over noble fruits in man's life, and utterly choke them out: one of the most crying maladies of these days, and to be testified against, and in all ways to the uttermost withstood. Wise, of a wisdom far beyond our shallow depth, was that old precept: *Watch thy tongue*; out of it are the issues of Life! "Man is properly an *incarnated word*:" the *word* that he speaks is the *man* himself. Were eyes put into our head, that we might *see*; or only that we might fancy, and plausibly pretend, we had *seen*? Was the tongue suspended there, that it might tell truly what we had seen, and make man the soul's-brother of man; or only that it might utter vain sounds, jargon, soul-confusing, and so *divide* man, as by enchanted walls of Darkness, from union with man? Thou who wearest that cunning, heaven-made organ, a Tongue, think well of this. Speak not, I passionately entreat thee, till thy thought hath silently matured itself, till thou have other than mad and mad-making noises to emit: *hold thy tongue* (thou hast it a-holding) till *some* meaning lie behind, to set it wagging. Consider the significance of SILENCE: it is boundless, never by meditating to be exhausted; unspeakably profitable to thee! Cease that chaotic hubbub, wherein thy own soul runs to waste, to confused suicidal dislocation and stupor: out of Silence comes thy strength. "Speech is silvern, Silence is golden; Speech is human, Silence is divine." Fool! thinkest thou that because no Boswell is there with ass-skin and blacklead to note thy jargon, it therefore dies and is harmless? Nothing dies, nothing can die. No idlest word thou speakest but is a seed cast into Time, and grows through all Eternity! The Recording Angel, consider it well, is no fable, but the truest of truths: the paper

tablets thou canst burn; of the "iron leaf" there is no burning.—Truly, if we can permit God Almighty to note down our conversation, thinking it good enough for Him,—any poor Boswell need not scruple to work his will of it.

Leaving now this our English *Odyssey*, with its Singer and Scholiast, let us come to the *Ulysses*; that great Samuel Johnson himself, the far-experienced, "much-enduring man," whose labours and pilgrimage are here sung. A full-length image of his Existence has been preserved for us: and he, perhaps of all living Englishmen, was the one who best deserved that honour. For if it is true, and now almost proverbial, that "the Life of the lowest mortal, if faithfully recorded, would be interesting to the highest;" how much more when the mortal in question was already distinguished in fortune and natural quality, so that his thinkings and doings were not significant of himself only, but of large masses of mankind! "There is not a man whom I meet on the streets," says one, "but I could like, were it otherwise convenient, to know his Biography:" nevertheless, could an enlightened curiosity be so far gratified, it must be owned the Biography of most ought to be, in an extreme degree, *summary*. In this world, there is so wonderfully little self-subsistence among men; next to no originality (though never absolutely *none*): one Life is too servilely the copy of another; and so in whole thousands of them you find little that is properly new; nothing but the old song sung by a new voice, with better or worse execution, here and there an ornamental quaver, and false notes enough: but the fundamental tune is ever the same; and for the *words*, these, all that they meant stands written generally on the Churchyard-stone: *Natus sum; esuriebam, quærebam; nunc repletus requiesco.* Mankind sail their Life-voyage in huge fleets, following some single whale-fishing or herring-fishing Commodore: the log-book of each differs not, in essential purport, from that of any other: nay the most have no legible log-book (reflection, observation not being among their talents); keep no reckoning, only *keep in sight* of the flagship,—and fish. Read the Commodore's Papers (know *his* Life); and even your lover of that street Biography will have learned the most of what he sought after.

Or, the servile *imitancy*, and yet also a nobler relationship and mysterious union to one another which lies in such imi-

tancy, of Mankind might be illustrated under the different figure, itself nowise *original*, of a Flock of Sheep. Sheep go in flocks for three reasons : First, because they are of a gregarious temper, and *love* to be together : Secondly, because of their cowardice ; they are afraid to be left alone : Thirdly, because the common run of them are dull of sight, to a proverb, and can have no choice in roads ; sheep can in fact *see* nothing : in a celestial Luminary, and a scoured pewter Tankard, would discern only that both dazzled them, and were of unspeakable glory. How like their fellow-creatures of the human species ! Men too, as was from the first maintained here, are gregarious ; then surely faint-hearted enough, trembling to be left by themselves ; above all, dull-sighted, down to the verge of utter blindness. Thus are we seen ever running in torrents, and mobs, if we run at all ; and after what foolish scoured Tankards, mistaking them for Suns ! Foolish Turnip-lanterns likewise, to all appearance supernatural, keep whole nations quaking, their hair on end. Neither know we, except by blind habit, where the good pastures lie : solely when the sweet grass is between our teeth, we know it, and chew it ; also when grass is bitter and scant, we know it,—and bleat and butt : these last two facts we know of a truth and in very deed. Thus do Men and Sheep play their parts on this Nether Earth ; wandering restlessly in large masses, they know not whither ; for most part, each following his neighbour, and his own nose.

Nevertheless, not always ; look better, you shall find certain that do, in some small degree, *know whither*. Sheep have their Bell-wether ; some ram of the folds, endued with more valour, with clearer vision than other sheep ; he leads them through the wolds, by height and hollow, to the woods and water-courses, for covert or for pleasant provender ; courageously marching, and if need be leaping, and with hoof and horn doing battle, in the van : him they courageously and with assured heart follow. Touching it is, as every herdsman will inform you, with what chivalrous devotedness these woolly Hosts adhere to their Wether ; and rush after him, through good report and through bad report, were it into safe shelters and green thymy nooks, or into asphaltic lakes and the jaws of devouring lions. Ever also must we recall that fact which we owe Jean Paul's quick eye : " If you hold a stick before the Wether, so that he, by necessity, leaps in passing you, and then withdraw your stick, the Flock will nevertheless all leap as he did ; and

the thousandth sheep shall be found impetuously vaulting over air, as the first did over an otherwise impassable barrier." Reader, wouldst thou understand Society, ponder well those ovine proceedings; thou wilt find them all curiously significant.

Now if sheep always, how much more must men always, have their Chief, their Guide! Man too is by nature quite thoroughly *gregarious*: nay ever he struggles to be something more, to be *social*; not even when Society has become impossible, does that deep-seated tendency and effort forsake him. Man, as if by miraculous magic, imparts his Thoughts, his Mood of mind to man; an unspeakable communion binds all past, present and future men into one indissoluble whole, almost into one living individual. Of which high, mysterious Truth, this disposition to *imitate*, to lead and be led, this impossibility *not* to imitate, is the most constant, and one of the simplest manifestations. To imitate! which of us all can measure the significance that lies in that one word? By virtue of which the infant Man, born at Woolsthorpe, grows up not to be a hairy Savage, and chewer of Acorns, but an Isaac Newton and Discoverer of Solar Systems!—Thus both in a celestial and terrestrial sense are we a *Flock*, such as there is no other: nay looking away from the base and ludicrous to the sublime and sacred side of the matter (since in every matter there are two sides), have not we also a SHEPHERD, "if we will but hear his voice"? Of those stupid multitudes there is no one but has an immortal Soul within him; a reflex and living image of God's whole Universe: strangely, from its dim environment, the light of the Highest looks through him;—for which reason, indeed, it is that we claim a brotherhood with him, and so love to know his History, and come into clearer and clearer union with all that he feels, and says, and does.

However, the chief thing to be noted was this: Amid those dull millions, who, as a dull flock, roll hither and thither, whithersoever they are led; and seem all sightless and slavish, accomplishing, attempting little save what the animal instinct in its somewhat higher kind might teach, To keep themselves and their young ones alive,—are scattered here and there superior natures, whose eye is not destitute of free vision, nor their heart of free volition. These latter, therefore, examine and determine, not what others do, but what it is right to do; towards which, and which only, will they, with such force as is given them,

resolutely endeavour: for if the Machine, living or inanimate, is merely *fed*, or desires to be fed, and so *works*; the Person can *will*, and so *do*. These are properly our Men, our Great Men; the guides of the dull host,—which follows them as by an irrevocable decree. They are the chosen of the world: they had this rare faculty not only of "supposing" and "inclining to think," but of *knowing* and *believing*; the nature of their being was, that they lived not by Hearsay, but by clear Vision; while others hovered and swam along, in the grand Vanity-fair of the World, blinded by the mere Shows of things, these saw into the Things themselves, and could walk as men having an eternal loadstar, and with their feet on sure paths. Thus was there a *Reality* in their existence; something of a perennial character; in virtue of which indeed it is that the memory of them is perennial. Whoso belongs only to his own age, and reverences only *its* gilt Popinjays or soot-smeared Mumbojumbos, must needs die with it: though he have been crowned seven times in the capitol, or seventy-and-seven times, and Rumour have blown his praises to all the four winds, deafening every ear therewith,—it avails not; there was nothing universal, nothing eternal in him; he must fade away, even as the Popinjay-gildings and Scarecrow-apparel, which he could not see through. The great man does, in good truth, belong to his own age; nay more so than any other man; being properly the synopsis and epitome of such age with its interests and influences: but belongs likewise to all ages, otherwise he is not great. What was transitory in him passes away; and an immortal part remains, the significance of which is in strict speech inexhaustible,—as that of every *real* object is. Aloft, conspicuous, on his enduring basis, he stands there, serene, unaltering; silently addresses to every new generation a new lesson and monition. Well is his Life worth writing, worth interpreting; and ever, in the new dialect of new times, of re-writing and re-interpreting.

Of such chosen men was Samuel Johnson: not ranking among the highest, or even the high, yet distinctly admitted into that sacred band; whose existence was no idle Dream, but a Reality which he transacted *awake*; nowise a Clothes-horse and Patent Digester, but a genuine Man. By nature he was gifted for the noblest of earthly tasks, that of Priesthood, and Guidance of mankind; by destiny, moreover, he was appointed to this task, and did actually, according to strength, fulfil the same: so that always the question, *How;*

in what spirit; under what shape? remains for us to be asked and answered concerning him. For as the highest Gospel was a Biography, so is the Life of every good man still an indubitable Gospel, and preaches to the eye and heart and whole man, so that Devils even must believe and tremble, these gladdest tidings: "Man is heaven-born; not the thrall of Circumstances, of Necessity, but the victorious subduer thereof: behold how he can become the 'Announcer of himself and of his Freedom;' and is ever what the Thinker has named him, 'the Messias of Nature.'"—Yes, Reader, all this that thou hast so often heard about "force of circumstances," "the creature of the time," "balancing of motives," and who knows what melancholy stuff to the like purport, wherein thou, as in a nightmare Dream, sittest paralysed, and hast no force left,—was in very truth, if Johnson and waking men are to be credited, little other than a hag-ridden vision of death-sleep; some *half*-fact, more fatal at times than a whole falsehood. Shake it off; awake; up and be doing, even as it is given thee!

The Contradiction which yawns wide enough in every Life, which it is the meaning and task of Life to reconcile, was in Johnson's wider than in most. Seldom, for any man, has the contrast between the ethereal heavenward side of things, and the dark sordid earthward, been more glaring: whether we look at Nature's work with him or Fortune's, from first to last, heterogeneity, as of sunbeams and miry clay, is on all hands manifest. Whereby indeed, only this was declared, That *much Life* had been given him; many things to triumph over, a great work to *do*. Happily also he did it; better than the most.

Nature had given him a high, keen-visioned, almost poetic soul; yet withal imprisoned in it an inert, unsightly body; he that could never rest had not limbs that would move with him, but only roll and waddle: the inward eye, all-penetrating, all-embracing, must look through bodily windows that were dim, half-blinded; he so loved men, and "never once *saw* the human face divine"! Not less did he prize the love of men; he was eminently social; the approbation of his fellows was dear to him, "valuable," as he owned, "if from the meanest of human beings:" yet the first impression he produced on every man was to be one of aversion, almost of disgust. By Nature it was farther ordered that the imperious Johnson should be born poor:

the ruler-soul, strong in its native royalty, generous, uncontrollable, like the lion of the woods, was to be housed, then, in such a dwelling-place: of Disfigurement, Disease, and lastly of a Poverty which itself made him the servant of servants. Thus was the born king likewise a born slave: the divine spirit of Music must awake imprisoned amid dull-croaking universal Discords; the Ariel finds himself encased in the coarse hulls of a Caliban. So is it more or less, we know (and thou, O Reader, knowest and feelest even now), with all men: yet with the fewest men in any such degree as with Johnson.

Fortune, moreover, which had so managed his first appearance in the world, lets not her hand lie idle, or turn the other way, but works unweariedly in the same spirit, while he is journeying through the world. What such a mind, stamped of Nature's noblest metal, though in so ungainly a die, was specially and best of all fitted for, might still be a question. To none of the world's few Incorporated Guilds could he have adjusted himself without difficulty, without distortion; in none been a Guild-Brother well at ease. Perhaps, if we look to the strictly practical nature of his faculty, to the strength, decision, method that manifests itself in him, we may say that his calling was rather towards Active than Speculative life; that as Statesman (in the higher, now obsolete sense), Law-giver, Ruler, in short as Doer of the Work, he had shone even more than as Speaker of the Word. His honesty of heart, his courageous temper, the value he set on things outward and material, might have made him a King among Kings. Had the golden age of those new French Prophets, when it shall be *à chacun selon sa capacité, à chaque capacité selon ses œuvres*, but arrived! Indeed even in our brazen and Birmingham-lacquer age, he himself regretted that he had not become a Lawyer, and risen to be Chancellor, which he might well have done. However, it was otherwise appointed. To no man does Fortune throw open all the kingdoms of this world, and say: It is thine; choose where thou wilt dwell! To the most she opens hardly the smallest cranny or doghutch, and says, not without asperity: There, that is thine while thou canst keep it; nestle thyself there, and bless Heaven! Alas, men must fit themselves into many things: some forty years ago, for instance, the noblest and ablest Man in all the British lands might be seen not swaying the royal sceptre, or the pontiff's censer, on the pinnacle of the World, but gauging ale-tubs

in the little burgh of Dumfries! Johnson came a little nearer the mark than Burns: but with him too "Strength was mournfully denied its arena!" he too had to fight Fortune at strange odds, all his life long.

Johnson's disposition for *royalty* (had the Fates so ordered it) is well seen in early boyhood. "His favourites," says Boswell, "used to receive very liberal assistance from him; and such was the submission and deference with which he was treated, that three of the boys, of whom Mr. Hector was sometimes one, used to come in the morning as his humble attendants, and carry him to school. One in the middle stooped, while he sat upon his back, and one on each side supported him; and thus was he borne triumphant." The purfly, sand-blind lubber and blubber, with his open mouth, and face of bruised honeycomb; yet already dominant, imperial, irresistible! Not in the "King's-chair" (of human arms), as we see, do his three satellites carry him along: rather on the *Tyrant's-saddle*, the back of his fellow-creature, must he ride prosperous!—The child is father of the man. He who had seen fifty years into coming Time, would have felt that little spectacle of mischievous schoolboys to be a great one. For us, who look back on it, and what followed it, now from afar, there arise questions enough: How looked these urchins? What jackets and galligaskins had they; felt headgear, or of dogskin leather? What was old Lichfield doing then; what thinking?—and so on, through the whole series of Corporal Trim's "auxiliary verbs." A picture of it all fashions itself together;—only unhappily we have no brush and no fingers.

Boyhood is now past; the ferula of Pedagogue waves harmless, in the distance: Samuel has struggled up to uncouth bulk and youthhood, wrestling with Disease, and Poverty, all the way; which two continue still his companions. At College we see little of him; yet thus much, that things went not well. A rugged wildman of the desert, awakened to the feeling of himself; proud as the proudest, poor as the poorest; stoically shut up, silently enduring the incurable: what a world of blackest gloom, with sun-gleams and pale tearful moon-gleams, and flickerings of a celestial and an infernal splendour, was this that now opened for him! But the weather is wintry; and the toes of the man are looking through his shoes. His muddy features grow of a purple and sea-green colour; a flood of black indignation mantling beneath. A truculent, raw-boned figure! Meat he has

probably little ; hope he has less : his feet, as we said, have come into brotherhood with the cold mire.

" Shall I be particular," inquires Sir John Hawkins, " and relate a circumstance of his distress, that cannot be imputed to him as an effect of his own extravagance or irregularity, and consequently reflects no disgrace on his memory ? He had scarce any change of raiment, and, in a short time after Corbet left him, but one pair of shoes, and those so old that his feet were seen through them : a gentleman of his college, the father of an eminent clergyman now living, directed a servitor one morning to place a new pair at the door of Johnson's chamber ; who seeing them upon his first going out, so far forgot himself and the spirit which must have actuated his unknown benefactor, that, with all the indignation of an insulted man, he threw them away."

How exceedingly surprising !—The Rev. Dr. Hall remarks : " As far as we can judge from a cursory view of the weekly account in the buttery-books, Johnson appears to have lived as well as other commoners and scholars." Alas ! such " cursory view of the buttery-books," now from the safe distance of a century, in the safe chair of a College Mastership, is one thing ; the continual view of the empty or locked buttery itself was quite a different thing. But hear our Knight, how he farther discourses. " Johnson," quoth Sir John, could " not at this early period of his life divest himself of an idea that poverty was disgraceful ; and was very severe in his censures of that economy in both our Universities, which exacted at meals the attendance of poor scholars, under the several denominations of Servitors in the one, and Sizers in the other : he thought that the scholar's, like the Christian life, levelled all distinctions of rank and worldly preëminence ; but in this he was *mistaken* : civil polity " etc., etc.—Too true ! It is man's lot to err.

However, Destiny, in all ways, means to prove the mistaken Samuel, and see what stuff is in him. He must leave these butteries of Oxford, Want like an armed man compelling him ; retreat into his father's mean home ; and there abandon himself for a season to inaction, disappointment, shame and nervous melancholy nigh run mad : he is probably the wretchedest man in wide England. In all ways he too must " become perfect through *suffering*."—High thoughts have visited him ; his College Exercises have been

praised beyond the walls of College; Pope himself has seen that *Translation*, and approved of it: Samuel had whispered to himself: I too am "one and somewhat." False thoughts; that leave only misery behind! The fever-fire of Ambition is too painfully extinguished (but not cured) in the frost-bath of Poverty. Johnson has knocked at the gate, as one having a right; but there was no opening: the world lies all encircled as with brass; nowhere can he find or force the smallest entrance. An ushership at Market Bosworth, and "a disagreement between him and Sir Wolstan Dixie, the patron of the school," yields him bread of affliction and water of affliction; but so bitter, that unassisted human nature cannot swallow them. Young Samson will grind no more in the Philistine mill of Bosworth; quits hold of Sir Wolstan, and the "domestic chaplaincy, so far at least as to say grace at table," and also to be "treated with what he represented as intolerable harshness;" and so, after "some months of such complicated misery," feeling doubtless that there are worse things in the world than quick death by Famine, "relinquishes a situation, which all his life afterwards he recollected with the strongest aversion, and even horror." Men like Johnson are properly called the Forlorn Hope of the World: judge whether his hope was forlorn or not, by this Letter to a dull oily Printer who called himself *Sylvanus Urban*:

"Sir,—As you appear no less sensible than your readers of the defect of your poetical article, you will not be displeased if (in order to the improvement of it) I communicate to you the sentiments of a person who will undertake, on reasonable terms, sometimes to fill a column.

"His opinion is, that the public would" etc., etc.

"If such a correspondence will be agreeable to you, be pleased to inform me in two posts, what the conditions are on which you shall expect it. Your late offer (for a Prize Poem) gives me no reason to distrust your generosity. If you engage in any literary projects besides this paper, I have other designs to impart."

Reader, the generous person, to whom this letter goes addressed, is "Mr. Edmund Cave, at St. John's Gate, London;" the addressor of it is Samuel Johnson, in Birmingham, Warwickshire.

Nevertheless, Life rallies in the man; reasserts its right

to be *lived*, even to be enjoyed. "Better a small bush," say the Scotch, "than no shelter:" Johnson learns to be contented with humble human things; and is there not already an actual realized human Existence, all stirring and living on every hand of him? Go thou and do likewise! In Birmingham itself, with his own purchased goose-quill, he can earn "five guineas;" nay, finally, the choicest terrestrial good: a Friend, who will be Wife to him! Johnson's marriage with the good Widow Porter has been treated with ridicule by many mortals, who apparently had no understanding thereof. That the purblind, seamy-faced Wildman, stalking lonely, woe-stricken, like some Irish Gallowglass with peeled club, whose speech no man knew, whose look all men both laughed at and shuddered at, should find any brave female heart to acknowledge, at first sight and hearing of him, "This is the most sensible man I ever met with;" and then, with generous courage, to take him to itself, and say, Be thou mine; be thou warmed here, and thawed to life!—in all this, in the kind Widow's love and pity for him, in Johnson's love and gratitude, there is actually no matter for ridicule. Their wedded life, as is the common lot, was made up of drizzle and dry weather; but innocence and worth dwelt in it; and when death had ended it, a certain sacredness: Johnson's deathless affection for his Tetty was always venerable and noble.

However, be all this as it might, Johnson is now minded to wed; and will live by the trade of Pedagogy, for by this also may life be kept in. Let the world therefore take notice: "*At Edial near Lichfield, in Staffordshire, young gentlemen are boarded, and taught the Latin and Greek languages, by*—SAMUEL JOHNSON." Had this Edial enterprise prospered, how different might the issue have been! Johnson had lived a life of unnoticed nobleness, or swoln into some amorphous Dr. Parr, of no avail to us; Bozzy would have dwindled into official insignificance, or risen by some other elevation; old Auchinleck had never been afflicted with "ane that keeped a schule," or obliged to violate hospitality by a "Cromwell do? God, sir, he gart kings ken that there was a *lith* in their neck!"—But the Edial enterprise did not prosper; Destiny had other work appointed for Samuel Johnson; and young gentlemen got board where they could elsewhere find it. This man was to become a Teacher of grown gentlemen, in the most surprising way; a Man of Letters, and Ruler of the British Nation for some

time,—not of their bodies merely but of their minds, not *over* them but *in* them.

The career of Literature could not, in Johnson's day, any more than now, be said to lie along the shores of a Pactolus: whatever else might be gathered there, gold-dust was nowise the chief produce. The world, from the times of Socrates, St. Paul, and far earlier, has always had its Teachers; and always treated them in a peculiar way. A shrewd Townclerk (not of Ephesus), once, in founding a Burgh-Seminary, when the question came, How the Schoolmasters should be maintained? delivered this brief counsel: "D—n them, keep them *poor*!" Considerable wisdom may lie in this aphorism. At all events, we see, the world has acted on it long, and indeed improved on it,—putting many a Schoolmaster of its great Burgh-Seminary to a death which even *cost* it something. The world, it is true, had for some time been too busy to go out of its way, and *put* any author to death; however, the old sentence pronounced against them was found to be pretty sufficient. The first Writers, being Monks, were sworn to a vow of Poverty; the modern Authors had no need to swear to it. This was the epoch when an Otway could still die of hunger; not to speak of your innumerable Scrogginses, whom "the Muse found stretched beneath a rug," with "rusty grate unconscious of a fire," stocking-nightcap, sanded floor, and all the other escutcheons of the craft, time out of mind the heirlooms of Authorship. Scroggins, however, seems to have been but an idler; not at all so diligent as worthy Mr. Boyce, whom we might have seen *sitting up* in bed, with his wearing-apparel of Blanket about him, and a hole slit in the same, that his hand might be at liberty to work in its vocation. The worst was, that too frequently a blackguard recklessness of temper ensued, incapable of turning to account what good the gods even here had provided: your Boyces acted on some stoico-epicurean principle of *carpe diem*, as men do in bombarded towns, and seasons of raging pestilence;—and so had lost not only their life, and presence of mind, but their status as persons of respectability. The trade of Author was at about one of its lowest ebbs when Johnson embarked on it.

Accordingly we find no mention of Illuminations in the city of London, when this same Ruler of the British Nation arrived in it: no cannon-salvos are fired: no flourish of

drums and trumpets greets his appearance on the scene. He enters quite quietly, with some copper halfpence in his pocket ; creeps into lodgings in Exeter Street, Strand ; and has a Coronation Pontiff also, of not less peculiar equipment, whom, with all submissiveness, he must wait upon, in his Vatican of St. John's Gate. This is the dull oily Printer alluded to above.

" Cave's temper," says our Knight Hawkins, " was phlegmatic : though he assumed, as the publisher of the Magazine, the name of Sylvanus Urban, he had few of those qualities that constitute urbanity. Judge of his want of them by this question, which he once put to an author : ' Mr. ——, I hear you have just published a pamphlet, and am told there is a very good paragraph in it upon the subject of music : did you write that yourself ? ' His discernment was also slow ; and as he had already at his command some writers of prose and verse, who, in the language of Booksellers, are called good hands, he was the backwarder in making advances, or courting an intimacy with Johnson. Upon the first approach of a stranger, his practice was to continue sitting ; a posture in which he was ever to be found, and for a few minutes to continue silent : if at any time he was inclined to begin the discourse, it was generally by putting a leaf of the Magazine, then in the press, into the hand of his visitor, and asking his opinion of it. . . .

" He was so incompetent a judge of Johnson's abilities, that meaning at one time to dazzle him with the splendour of some of those luminaries in Literature, who favoured him with their correspondence, he told him that if he would, in the evening, be at a certain alehouse in the neighbourhood of Clerkenwell, he might have a chance of seeing Mr. Browne and another or two of those illustrious contributors : Johnson accepted the invitation ; and being introduced by Cave, dressed in a loose horseman's coat, and such a great bushy wig as he constantly wore, to the sight of Mr. Browne, whom he found sitting at the upper end of a long table, in a cloud of tobacco-smoke, had his curiosity gratified." *

In fact, if we look seriously into the condition of Authorship at that period, we shall find that Johnson had undertaken one of the ruggedest of all possible enterprises ; that

* Hawkins, pp. 46–50.

here as elsewhere Fortune had given him unspeakable Contradictions to reconcile. For a man of Johnson's stamp, the Problem was twofold: *First*, not only as the humble but indispensable condition of all else, to keep himself, if so might be, *alive*; but *secondly*, to keep himself alive by speaking forth the *Truth* that was in him, and speaking it *truly*, that is, in the clearest and fittest utterance the Heavens had enabled him to give it, let the Earth say to this what she liked. Of which twofold Problem if it be hard to solve either member separately, how incalculably more so to solve it, when both are conjoined, and work with endless complication into one another! He that finds himself already *kept alive* can sometimes (unhappily not always) speak a little truth; he that finds himself able and willing, to all lengths, to *speak lies*, may, by watching how the wind sits, scrape together a livelihood, sometimes of great splendour: he, again, who finds himself provided with *neither* endowment, has but a ticklish game to play, and shall have praises if he win it. Let us look a little at both faces of the matter; and see what front they then offered our Adventurer, what front he offered them.

At the time of Johnson's appearance on the field, Literature, in many senses, was in a transitional state; chiefly in this sense, as respects the pecuniary subsistence of its cultivators. It was in the very act of passing from the protection of Patrons into that of the Public; no longer to supply its necessities by laudatory Dedications to the Great, but by judicious Bargains with the Booksellers. This happy change has been much sung and celebrated; many a "lord of the lion heart and eagle eye" looking back with scorn enough on the bygone system of Dependency: so that now it were perhaps well to consider, for a moment, what good might also be in it, what gratitude we owe it. That a good was in it, admits not of doubt. Whatsoever has existed has had its value: without some truth and worth lying in it, the thing could not have hung together, and been the organ and sustenance, and method of action, for men that reasoned and were alive. Translate a Falsehood which is wholly false into Practice, the result comes out *zero*; there is no fruit or issue to be derived from it. That in an age, when a Nobleman was still noble, still with his wealth the protector of worthy and humane things, and still venerated as such, a poor Man of Genius, his brother in nobleness, should, with unfeigned reverence,

address him and say: "I have found Wisdom here, and would fain proclaim it abroad; wilt thou, of thy abundance, afford me the means?"—in all this there was no baseness; it was wholly an honest proposal, which a free man might make, and a free man listen to. So might a Tasso, with a *Gerusalemme* in his hand or in his head, speak to a Duke of Ferrara; so might a Shakspeare to his Southampton; and Continental Artists generally to their rich Protectors,—in some countries, down almost to these days. It was only when the reverence became *feigned*, that baseness entered into the transaction on both sides; and, indeed, flourished there with rapid luxuriance, till that became disgraceful for a Dryden, which a Shakspeare could once practise without offence.

Neither, it is very true, was the new way of Bookseller Mæcenasship worthless; which opened itself at this juncture, for the most important of all transport-trades, now when the old way had become too miry and impassable. Remark, moreover, how this second sort of Mæcenasship, after carrying us through nearly a century of Literary Time, appears now to have wellnigh discharged *its* function also; and to be working pretty rapidly towards some *third* method, the exact conditions of which are yet nowise visible. Thus all things have their end; and we should part with them all, not in anger, but in peace. The Bookseller-System, during its peculiar century, the whole of the eighteenth, did carry us handsomely along; and many good Works it has left us, and many good Men it maintained: if it is now expiring by PUFFERY, as the Patronage-System did by FLATTERY (for *Lying* is ever the forerunner of Death, nay is itself Death), let us not forget its benefits; how it nursed Literature through boyhood and school-years, as Patronage had wrapped it in soft swaddling-bands;—till now we see it about to put on the *toga virilis*, could it but *find* any such!

There is tolerable travelling on the beaten road, run how it may; only on the new road not yet levelled and paved, and on the old road all broken into ruts and quagmires, is the travelling bad or impracticable. The difficulty lies always in the *transition* from one method to another. In which state it was that Johnson now found Literature; and out of which, let us also say, he manfully carried it. What remarkable mortal *first paid copyright* in England we have not ascertained; perhaps, for almost a century

before, some scarce visible or ponderable pittance of wages had occasionally been yielded by the Seller of Books to the Writer of them: the original Covenant, stipulating to produce *Paradise Lost* on the one hand, and *Five Pounds Sterling* on the other, still lies (we have been told) in black-on-white, for inspection and purchase by the curious, at a Bookshop in Chancery Lane. Thus had the matter gone on, in a mixed confused way, for some threescore years;—as ever, in such things, the old system *overlaps* the new, by some generation or two, and only dies quite out when the new has got a complete organization and weather-worthy surface of its own. Among the first Authors, the very first of any significance, who lived by the day's wages of his craft, and composedly faced the world on that basis, was Samuel Johnson.

At the time of Johnson's appearance there were still two ways, on which an Author might attempt proceeding: there were the Mæcenases proper in the West End of London; and the Mæcenases virtual of St. John's Gate and Paternoster Row. To a considerate man it might seem uncertain which method were preferable: neither had very high attractions; the Patron's aid was now well-nigh *necessarily* polluted by sycophancy, before it could come to hand; the Bookseller's was deformed with greedy stupidity, not to say entire wooden-headedness and disgust (so that an Osborne even required to be knocked down, by an author of spirit), and could barely keep the thread of life together. The one was the wages of suffering and poverty; the other, unless you gave strict heed to it, the wages of sin. In time, Johnson had opportunity of looking into both methods, and ascertaining what they were; but found, at first trial, that the former would in nowise do for him. Listen, once again, to that far-famed Blast of Doom, proclaiming into the ear of Lord Chesterfield, and, through him, of the listening world, that patronage should be no more!

"Seven years, my Lord, have now past, since I waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my Work * through difficulties, of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it at last to the verge of publication, without

* The *English Dictionary*.

one act of assistance,* one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour.

"The shepherd in Virgil grew at last acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks.

"Is not a patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind: but it has been delayed till I am indifferent and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary and cannot impart it; till I am known and do not want it. I hope, it is no very cynical asperity, not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received; or to be unwilling that the public should consider me as owing that to a patron which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

"Having carried on my Work thus far with so little obligation to any favourer of learning, I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less: for I have long been awakened from that dream of hope, in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation.

"My Lord, your Lordship's most humble, most obedient servant, SAM. JOHNSON."

And thus must the rebellious "Sam. Johnson" turn him to the Bookselling guild, and the wondrous chaos of "Author by trade;" and, though ushered into it only by that dull oily Printer, "with loose horseman's coat and such a great bushy wig as he constantly wore," and only as subaltern to some commanding-officer "Browne, sitting amid tobacco-smoke at the head of a long table in the alehouse at Clerkenwell,"—gird himself together for the warfare; having no alternative!

Little less contradictory was that other branch of the twofold Problem now set before Johnson: the speaking forth of *Truth*. Nay taken by itself, it had in those days become so complex as to puzzle strongest heads, with

* Were time and printer's space of no value, it were easy to wash away certain foolish soot-stains dropped here as "Notes;" especially two: the one on this word, and on Boswell's Note to it; the other on the paragraph which follows. Let "ED." look a second time; he will find that Johnson's sacred regard for *Truth* is the only thing to be "noted" in the former case; also, in the latter, that this of "Love's being a native of the rocks" actually *has* a "meaning."

nothing else imposed on them for solution; and even to turn high heads of that sort into mere hollow *vizards*, speaking neither truth nor falsehood, nor anything but what the Prompter and Player (ὑποκριτὴς) put into them. Alas! for poor Johnson Contradiction abounded; in spirituals and in temporals, within and without. Born with the strongest unconquerable love of just Insight, he must begin to live and learn in a scene where Prejudice flourishes with rank luxuriance. England was all confused enough, sightless and yet restless, take it where you would; but figure the best intellect in England nursed up to manhood in the idol-cavern of a poor Tradesman's house, in the cathedral city of Lichfield! What is Truth? said jesting Pilate. What is Truth? might earnest Johnson much more emphatically say. Truth, no longer, like the Phœnix, in rainbow plumage, poured, from her glittering beak, such tones of sweetest melody as took captive every ear: the Phœnix (waxing old) had wellnigh ceased her singing, and empty wearisome Cuckoos, and doleful monotonous Owls, innumerable Jays also, and twittering Sparrows on the housetop, pretended they were repeating her.

It was wholly a divided age, that of Johnson; Unity existed nowhere, in its Heaven, or in its Earth. Society, through every fibre, was rent asunder: all things, it was then becoming visible, but could not then be understood, were moving onwards, with an impulse received ages before, yet now first with a decisive rapidity, towards that great chaotic gulf, where, whether in the shape of French Revolutions, Reform Bills, or what shape soever, bloody or bloodless, the descent and engulfment assume, we now see them weltering and boiling. Already Cant, as once before hinted, had begun to play its wonderful part, for the hour was come: two ghastly Apparitions, unreal *simulacra* both, Hypocrisy and Atheism are already, in silence, parting the world. Opinion and Action, which should live together as wedded pair, "one flesh," more properly as Soul and Body, have commenced their open quarrel, and are suing for a separate maintenance,—as if they could exist separately. To the earnest mind, in any position, firm footing and a life of Truth was becoming daily more difficult: in Johnson's position it was more difficult than in almost any other.

If, as for a devout nature was inevitable and indis-

pensable, he looked up to Religion, as to the polestar of his voyage, already there was no *fixed* polestar any longer visible; but two stars, a whole constellation of stars, each proclaiming itself as the true. There was the red portentous comet-star of Infidelity; the dim fixed-star, burning ever dimmer, uncertain now whether not an atmospheric *meteor*, of Orthodoxy: which of these to choose? The keener intellects of Europe had, almost without exception, ranged themselves under the former: for some half century, it had been the general effort of European speculation to proclaim that Destruction of Falsehood was the only Truth; daily had Denial waxed stronger and stronger, Belief sunk more and more into decay. From our Bolingbrokes and Tolands the sceptical fever had passed into France, into Scotland; and already it smouldered, far and wide, secretly eating out the heart of England. Bayle had played his part; Voltaire on a wider theatre, was playing his,—Johnson's senior by some fifteen years: Hume and Johnson were children almost of the same year.* To this keener order of intellects did Johnson's indisputably belong: was he to join them; was he to oppose them? A complicated question: for, alas, the Church itself is no longer, even to him, wholly of true adamant, but of adamant and baked mud conjoined: the zealously Devout has to find his Church tottering; and pause amazed to see, instead of inspired Priest, many a swine-feeding Trulliber ministering at her altar. It is not the least curious of the incoherences which Johnson had to reconcile, that, though by nature contemptuous and incredulous, he was, at that time of day, to find his safety and glory in defending, with his whole might, the traditions of the elders.

Not less perplexingly intricate, and on both sides hollow or questionable, was the aspect of Politics. Whigs struggling blindly forward, Tories holding blindly back; each with some forecast of a half truth; neither with any forecast of the whole! Admire here this other Contradiction in the life of Johnson; that, though the most ungovernable and in practice the most independent of men, he must be a Jacobite, and worshipper of the Divine Right. In Politics also there are Irreconcilables enough for him. As, indeed, how could it be otherwise? For when Religion is torn asunder, and the very heart of man's existence set against

* Johnson, September 1709; Hume, April 1711.

itself, then in all subordinate departments there must needs be hollowness, incoherence. The English Nation had rebelled against a Tyrant; and, by the hands of religious tyrannicides, exacted stern vengeance of him: Democracy had risen iron-sinewed, and, "like an infant Hercules, strangled serpents in its cradle." But as yet none knew the meaning or extent of the phenomenon: Europe was not ripe for it; not to be ripened for it but by the culture and various experience of another century and a half. And now, when the King-killers were all swept away, and a milder *second* picture was painted over the canvas of the *first*, and betitled "Glorious Revolution," who doubted but the catastrophe was over, the whole business finished, and Democracy gone to its long sleep? Yet was it like a business finished and not finished; a lingering uneasiness dwelt in all minds: the deep-lying, resistless Tendency, which had still to be *obeyed*, could no longer be *recognized*; thus was there halfness, insincerity, uncertainty in men's ways; instead of heroic Puritans and heroic Cavaliers, came now a dawdling set of argumentative Whigs, and a dawdling set of deaf-eared Tories; each half-foolish, each half-false. The Whigs were false and without basis; inasmuch as their whole object was Resistance, Criticism, Demolition,—they knew not why, or towards what issue. In Whiggism, ever since a Charles and his Jeffries had ceased to meddle with it, and to have any Russel or Sydney to meddle with, there could be no divineness of character; not till, in these latter days, it took the figure of a thoroughgoing, all-defying Radicalism, was there any solid footing for it to stand on. Of the like uncertain, half-hollow nature had Toryism become, in Johnson's time; preaching forth indeed an everlasting truth, the duty of Loyalty; yet now, ever since the final expulsion of the Stuarts, having no *Person*, but only an *Office* to be loyal to; no living *Soul* to worship, but only a dead velvet-cushioned *Chair*. Its attitude, therefore, was stiff-necked refusal to move; as that of Whiggism was clamorous command to move,—let rhyme and reason, on both hands, say to it what they might. The consequence was: Immeasurable floods of contentious jargon, tending nowhither; false conviction; false resistance to conviction; decay (ultimately to become decease) of whatsoever was once understood by the words, *Principle*, or *Honesty* of heart; the louder and louder triumph of *Half*ness and

Plausibility over *Whole*ness and Truth ;—at last, this all-overshadowing efflorescence of QUACKERY, which we now see, with all its deadening and killing fruits, in all its innumerable branches, down to the lowest. How, between these jarring extremes, wherein the rotten lay so inextricably intermingled with the sound, and as yet no eye could see through the ulterior meaning of the matter, was a faithful and true man to adjust himself ?

That Johnson, in spite of all drawbacks, adopted the Conservative side ; stationed himself as the unyielding opponent of Innovation, resolute to hold fast the form of sound words, could not but increase, in no small measure, the difficulties he had to strive with. We mean, the *moral* difficulties ; for in *economical* respects, it might be pretty equally balanced ; the Tory servant of the Public had perhaps about the same chance of promotion as the Whig : and all the promotion Johnson aimed at was the privilege *to live*. But, for what, though unavowed, was no less indispensable, for his peace of conscience, and the clear ascertainment and feeling of his Duty as an inhabitant of God's world, the case was hereby rendered much more complex. To resist Innovation is easy enough on one condition : that you resist Inquiry. This is, and was, the common expedient of your common Conservatives ; but it would not do for Johnson : he was a zealous recommender and practiser of Inquiry ; once for all, could not and would not believe, much less speak and act, a Falsehood : the *form* of sound words, which he held fast, must have a *meaning* in it. Here lay the difficulty : to behold a portentous mixture of True and False, and feel that he must dwell and fight there ; yet to love and defend only the True. How worship, when you cannot and will not be an idolater ; yet cannot help discerning that the Symbol of your Divinity has half become idolatrous ? This was the question, which Johnson, the man both of clear eye and devout believing heart, must answer,—at peril of his life. The Whig or Sceptic, on the other hand, had a much simpler part to play. To him only the idolatrous side of things, nowise the divine one, lay visible : not *worship*, therefore, nay in the strict sense not heart-honesty, only at most lip- and hand-honesty, is required of him. What spiritual force is his, he can conscientiously employ in the work of cavilling, of pulling-down what is False. For the rest, that there is or can be any Truth of a higher than

sensual nature, has not occurred to him. The utmost, therefore, that he as man has to aim at, is RESPECTABILITY, the suffrages of his fellow-men. Such suffrages he may weigh as well as count: or count only: according as he is a Burke or a Wilkes. But beyond these there lies nothing divine for him; these attained, all is attained. Thus is his whole world distinct and rounded-in; a clear goal is set before him; a firm path, rougher or smoother; at worst a firm region wherein to seek a path: let him gird-up his loins, and travel on without misgivings! For the honest Conservative, again, nothing is distinct, nothing rounded-in: RESPECTABILITY can nowise be his highest Godhead; not one aim, but two conflicting aims to be continually reconciled by him, has he to strive after. A difficult position, as we said; which accordingly the most did, even in those days, but half defend: by the surrender, namely, of their own too cumbersome *honesty* or even *understanding*; after which the completest defence was worth little. Into this difficult position Johnson, nevertheless, threw himself: found it indeed full of difficulties; yet held it out manfully, as an honest-hearted, open-sighted man, while life was in him.

Such was that same "twofold Problem" set before Samuel Johnson. Consider all these moral difficulties; and add to them the fearful aggravation, which lay in that other circumstance, that he needed a continual appeal to the Public, must continually produce a certain impression and conviction on the Public; that if he did not, he ceased to have "provision for the day that was passing over him," he could not any longer live! How a vulgar character, once launched into this wild element; driven onwards by Fear and Famine; without other aim than to clutch what Provender (of Enjoyment in any kind) he could get, always if possible keeping *quite* clear of the Gallows and Pillory, that is to say, minding heedfully both "person" and "character,"—would have floated hither and thither in it; and contrived to eat some three repasts daily, and wear some three suits yearly, and then to depart and disappear, having consumed his last ration: all this might be worth knowing, but were in itself a trivial knowledge. How a noble man, resolute for the Truth, to whom Shams and Lies were once for all an abomination, was to act in it: *here* lay the mystery. By what methods, by what gifts of eye and hand, does a heroic Samuel Johnson, now

when cast forth into that waste Chaos of Authorship, maddest of things, a mingled Phlegethon and Fleet-ditch, with its floating lumber, and sea-krakens, and mud-spectres, —shape himself a voyage; of the *transient* driftwood, and the *enduring* iron, build him a sea-worthy Life-boat, and sail therein, undrowned, unpolluted, through the roaring "mother of dead dogs," onwards to an eternal Landmark, and City that hath foundations? This high question is even the one answered in Boswell's Book; which Book we therefore, not so falsely, have named a *Heroic Poem*; for in it there lies the whole argument of such. Glory to our brave Samuel! He accomplished this wonderful Problem; and now through long generations we point to him, and say: Here also was a Man; let the world once more have assurance of a Man!

Had there been in Johnson, now when afloat on that confusion worse confounded of grandeur and squalor, no light but an earthly outward one, he too must have made shipwreck. With his diseased body and vehement voracious heart, how easy for him to become a *carpe-diem* Philosopher, like the rest, and live and die as miserably as any Boyce of that Brotherhood! But happily there was a higher light for him; shining as a lamp to his path; which, in all paths, would teach him to act and walk not as a fool, but as wise, and in those evil days too "redeeming the time." Under dimmer or clearer manifestations, a Truth had been revealed to him: I also am a Man; even in this unutterable element of Authorship, I may live as beseems a man! That Wrong is not only different from Right, but that it is in strict scientific terms *infinitely* different; even as the gaining of the whole world set against the losing of one's own soul, or (as Johnson had it) a Heaven set against a Hell; that in all situations out of the Pit of Tophet, wherein a living Man has stood or can stand, there is actually a Prize of quite *infinite* value placed within his reach, namely a *Duty* for him to do: this highest Gospel, which forms the basis and worth of all other Gospels whatsoever, had been revealed to Samuel Johnson; and the man had believed it, and laid it faithfully to heart. Such knowledge of the *transcendental*, immeasurable character of Duty we call the basis of all Gospels, the essence of all Religion: he who with his whole soul knows not this, as yet knows nothing, as yet *is* properly nothing.

This, happily for him, Johnson was one of those that knew: under a certain authentic Symbol it stood forever present to his eyes: a Symbol, indeed, waxing old as doth a garment; yet which had guided forward, as their Banner and celestial Pillar of Fire, innumerable saints and witnesses, the fathers of our modern world; and for him also had still a sacred significance. It does not appear that at any time Johnson was what we call irreligious: but in his sorrows and isolation, when hope died away, and only a long vista of suffering and toil lay before him to the end, then first did Religion shine forth in its meek, everlasting clearness; even as the stars do in black night, which in the daytime and dusk were hidden by inferior lights. How a true man, in the midst of errors and uncertainties, shall work out for himself a sure Life-truth; and adjusting the transient to the eternal, amid the fragments of ruined Temples build up, with toil and pain, a little Altar for himself, and worship there; how Samuel Johnson, in the era of Voltaire, can purify and fortify his soul, and hold real communion with the Highest, "in the Church of St. Clement Danes:" this too stands all unfolded in his Biography, and is among the most touching and memorable things there; a thing to be looked at with pity, admiration, awe. Johnson's Religion was as the light of life to him; without it his heart was all sick, dark and had no guidance left.

He is now enlisted, or impressed, into that unspeakable shoeblack-seraph Army of Authors; but can feel hereby that he fights under a celestial flag, and will quit him like a man. The first grand requisite, an assured heart, he therefore has: what his outward equipments and accoutrements are, is the next question; an important, though inferior one. His intellectual stock, intrinsically viewed, is perhaps inconsiderable: the furnishings of an English School and English University; good knowledge of the Latin tongue, a more uncertain one of Greek: this is a rather slender stock of Education wherewith to front the world. But then it is to be remembered that his world was England; that such was the culture England commonly supplied and expected. Besides, Johnson has been a voracious reader, though a desultory one, and oftenest in strange scholastic, too obsolete Libraries; he has also rubbed shoulders with the press of Actual Life for some thirty years now: views or hallucinations of innumerable

things are weltering to and fro in him. Above all, be his weapons what they may, he has an arm that can wield them. Nature has given him her choicest gift,—an open eye and heart. He will look on the world, wheresoever he can catch a glimpse of it, with eager curiosity: to the last, we find this a striking characteristic of him; for all human interests he has a sense; the meanest handicraftsman could interest him, even in extreme age, by speaking of his craft: the ways of men are all interesting to him; any human thing, that he did not know, he wished to know. Reflection, moreover, Meditation, was what he practised incessantly, with or without his will: for the mind of the man was earnest, deep as well as humane. Thus would the world, such fragments of it as he could survey, form itself, or continually tend to form itself, into a coherent Whole; on any and on all phases of which, his vote and voice must be well worth listening to. As a Speaker of the Word, he will speak real words; no idle jargon or hollow triviality will issue from him. His aim too is clear, attainable; that of *working for his wages*: let him *do* this honestly, and all else will follow of its own accord.

With such omens, into such a warfare, did Johnson go forth. A rugged hungry Kerne or Gallowglass, as we called him: yet indomitable; in whom lay the true spirit of a Soldier. With giant's force he toils, since such is his appointment, were it but a hewing of wood and drawing of water for old sedentary bushy-wigged Cave; distinguishes himself by mere quantity, if there is to be no other distinction. He can write all things; frosty Latin verses, if these are the saleable commodity; Book-prefaces, Political Philippics, Review Articles, Parliamentary Debates: all things he does rapidly; still more surprising, all things he does thoroughly and well. How he sits there, in his rough-hewn amorphous bulk, in that upper-room at St. John's Gate, and trundles-off sheet after sheet of those Senate-of-Lilliput Debates, to the clamorous Printer's Devils waiting for them with insatiable throat, down stairs; himself perhaps *impransus* all the while! Admire also the greatness of Literature; how a grain of mustard-seed cast into its Nile-waters, shall settle in the teeming mould, and be found, one day, as a Tree, in whose branches all the fowls of heaven may lodge. Was it not so with these Lilliput Debates? In that small project and act began the stupendous FOURTH ESTATE; whose wide world-embracing

influences what eye can take in; in whose boughs are there not already fowls of strange feather lodged? Such things, and far stranger, were done in that wondrous old Portal, even in latter times. And then figure Samuel dining "behind the screen," from a trencher covertly handed-in to him, at a preconcerted nod from the "great bushy wig;" Samuel too ragged to show face, yet "made a happy man of" by hearing his praise spoken. If to Johnson himself, then much more to us, may that St. John's Gate be a place we can "never pass without veneration." *

* All Johnson's places of resort and abode are venerable, and now indeed to the many as well as to the few; for his name has become great; and, as we must often with a kind of sad admiration recognize, there is, even to the rudest man, no greatness so venerable as intellectual, as spiritual greatness; nay properly there is no other venerable at all. For example, what soul-subduing magic, for the very clown or craftsman of our England, lies in the word "Scholar"! "He is a Scholar:" he is a man *wiser* than we; of a wisdom to us *boundless*, infinite: who shall speak his worth! Such things, we say, fill us with a certain pathetic admiration of defaced and obstructed yet glorious man; archangel though in ruins,—or rather, though in *rubbish* of encumbrances and mud-incrustations, which also are not to be perpetual.

Nevertheless, in this mad-whirling all-forgetting London, the haunts of the mighty that were can seldom without a strange difficulty be discovered. Will any man, for instance, tell us which *bricks* it was in Lincoln's Inn Buildings that Ben Jonson's hand and trowel laid? No man, it is to be feared,—and also grumbled at. With Samuel Johnson may it prove otherwise! A Gentleman of the British Museum is said to have made drawings of all *his* residences: the blessing of Old Mortality be upon him! We ourselves, not without labour and risk, lately discovered GOUGH SQUARE, between Fleet Street and Holborn (adjoining both to BOLT COURT and to JOHNSON'S COURT); and on the second day of search, the very House there, wherein the *English Dictionary* was composed. It is the first or corner house on the right hand, as you enter through the arched way from the North-west. The actual occupant, an elderly, well-washed, decent-looking man, invited us to enter; and courteously undertook to be *cicerone*; though in his memory lay nothing but the foolishest jumble and hallucination. It is a stout, old-fashioned, oak-balustraded house: "I have spent many a pound and penny on it since then," said the worthy Landlord: "here, you see, this Bedroom was the Doctor's study; that was the garden" (a plot of delved ground somewhat larger than a bed-quilt), "where he walked for exercise; these three garret Bedrooms" (where his three Copyists sat and wrote) "were the place he kept his—*Pupils* in!" *Tempus edax rerum!* Yet *ferax* also: for our friend now added, with a wistful look, which strove to seem merely historical: "I let it all in Lodgings, to respectable gentlemen; by the quarter or the month; it's all one to me."—"To me also," whispered the Ghost of Samuel, as we went pensively our ways.

Poverty, Distress, and as yet Obscurity, are his companions: so poor is he that his Wife must leave him, and seek shelter among other relations; Johnson's household has accommodation for one inmate only. To all his ever-varying, ever-recurring troubles, moreover, must be added this continual one of ill-health, and its concomitant depressiveness: a galling load, which would have crushed most common mortals into desperation, is his appointed ballast and life-burden; he "could not remember the day he had passed free from pain." Nevertheless, Life, as we said before, is always Life: a healthy soul, imprison it as you will, in squalid garrets, shabby coat, bodily sickness, or whatever else, will assert its heaven-granted indefeasible Freedom, its right to conquer difficulties, to do work, even to feel gladness. Johnson does not whine over his existence, but manfully makes the most and best of it. "He said, a man might live in a garret at eighteenpence a-week: few people would inquire where he lodged; and if they did, it was easy to say, 'Sir, I am to be found at such a place.' By spending threepence in a coffee-house, he might be for some hours every day in very good company; he might dine for sixpence, breakfast on bread-and-milk for a penny, and do without supper. On *clean-shirt day* he went abroad and paid visits." Think by whom and of whom this was uttered, and ask then, Whether there is more pathos in it than in a whole circulating-library of *Giaours* and *Harolds*, or less pathos? On another occasion, "when Dr. Johnson, one day, read his own Satire, in which the life of a scholar is painted, with the various obstructions thrown in his way to fortune and to fame, he burst into a passion of tears: Mr. Thrale's family and Mr. Scott only were present, who, in a jocose way, clapped him on the back, and said, 'What's all this, my dear sir? Why, you and I and *Hercules*, you know, were all troubled with *melancholy*.' He was a very large man, and made-out the triumvirate with Johnson and Hercules comically enough." These were sweet tears; the sweet victorious remembrance lay in them of toils indeed frightful, yet never flinched from, and now triumphed over. "One day it shall delight you also to remember labour done!"—Neither, though Johnson is obscure and poor, need the highest enjoyment of existence, that of heart freely communing with heart, be denied him. Savage and he wander homeless through the streets; without bed, yet not without friendly con-

verse ; such another conversation not, it is like, producible in the proudest drawing-room of London. Nor, under the void Night, upon the hard pavement, are their own woes the only topic : nowise ; they " will stand by their country," they there, the two " Backwoodsmen " of the Brick Desert !

Of all outward evils Obscurity is perhaps in itself the least. To Johnson, as to a healthy-minded man, the fantastic article, sold or given under the title of *Fame*, had little or no value but its intrinsic one. He prized it as the means of getting him employment and good wages ; scarcely as anything more. His light and guidance came from a loftier source ; of which, in honest aversion to all hypocrisy or pretentious talk, he spoke not to men ; nay perhaps, being of a *healthy* mind, had never spoken to himself. We reckon it a striking fact in Johnson's history, this carelessness of his to Fame. Most authors speak of their " Fame " as if it were a quite priceless matter ; the grand ultimatum, and heavenly Constantine's-Banner they had to follow, and conquer under.—Thy " Fame " ! Unhappy mortal, where will it and thou both be in some fifty years ? Shakspeare himself has lasted but two hundred ; Homer (partly by accident) three thousand : and does not already an ETERNITY encircle every *Me* and every *Thee* ? Cease, then, to sit feverishly hatching on that " Fame " of thine ; and flapping and shrieking with fierce hisses, like brood-goose on her last egg, if man shall or dare approach it ! Quarrel not with me, hate me not, my Brother : make what thou canst of thy egg, and welcome : God knows, I will not steal it ; I believe it to be *addle*.—Johnson, for his part, was no man to be killed by a review ; concerning which matter, it was said by a benevolent person : If any author *can* be reviewed to death, let it be, with all convenient dispatch, *done*. Johnson thankfully receives any word spoken in his favour ; is nowise disobliged by a lampoon, but will look at it, if pointed out to him, and show how it might have been done better : the lampoon itself is indeed *nothing*, a soap-bubble that next moment will become a drop of sour suds ; but in the meanwhile, if it do anything, it keeps him more in the world's eye, and the next *bargain* will be all the richer : " Sir, if they should cease to talk of me, I must starve." Sound heart and understanding head : these fail no man, not even a Man of Letters !

Obscurity, however, was, in Johnson's case, whether a light or heavy evil, likely to be no lasting one. He is animated by the spirit of a true *workman*, resolute to do his work well; and he *does* his work well; all his work, that of writing, that of living. A man of this stamp is unhappily not so common in the literary or in any other department of the world, that he can continue always unnoticed. By slow degrees, Johnson emerges; looming, at first, huge and dim in the eye of an observant few; at last disclosed, in his real proportions, to the eye of the whole world, and encircled with a "light-nimbus" of glory, so that whoso is not blind must and shall behold him. By slow degrees, we said; for this also is notable; slow but sure: as his fame waxes not by exaggerated clamour of what he *seems* to be, but by better and better insight of what he *is*, so it will last and stand wearing, being genuine. Thus indeed is it always, or nearly always, with true fame. The heavenly Luminary rises amid vapours; stargazers enough must scan it with critical telescopes; it makes no blazing, the world can either look at it, or forbear looking at it; not till after a time and times does its celestial eternal nature become indubitable. Pleasant, on the other hand, is the blazing of a Tarbarrel; the crowd dance merrily round it, with loud huzzaing, universal three-times-three, and, like Homer's peasants, "bless the useful light:" but unhappily it so soon ends in darkness, foul choking smoke; and is kicked into the gutters, a nameless imbroglio of charred staves, pitch-cinders and *vomissement du diable!*

But indeed, from of old, Johnson has enjoyed all, or nearly all, that Fame can yield any man: the respect, the obedience of those that are about him and inferior to him; of those whose opinion alone can have any forcible impression on him. A little circle gathers round the Wise man; which gradually enlarges as the report thereof spreads, and more can come to see and to believe; for Wisdom is precious, and of irresistible attraction to all. "An inspired-idiot," Goldsmith, hangs strangely about him; though, as Hawkins says, "he loved not Johnson, but rather envied him for his parts; and once entreated a friend to desist from praising him, 'for in doing so,' said he, 'you harrow-up my very soul!'" Yet, on the whole, there is no evil in the "gooseberry-fool;" but rather much good; of a finer, if of a weaker, sort than Johnson's; and

all the more genuine that he himself could never become *conscious* of it,—though unhappily never cease *attempting* to become so: the Author of the genuine *Vicar of Wakefield*, nill he, will he, must needs fly towards such a mass of genuine Manhood; and Dr. Minor keep gyrating round Dr. Major, alternately attracted and repelled. Then there is the chivalrous Topham Beauclerk, with his sharp wit, and gallant courtly ways: there is Bennet Langton, an orthodox gentleman, and worthy; though Johnson once laughed, louder almost than mortal, at his last will and testament; and "could not stop his merriment, but continued it all the way till he got without the Temple-gate; then burst into such a fit of laughter that he appeared to be almost in a convulsion; and, in order to support himself, laid hold of one of the posts at the side of the foot-pavement, and sent forth peals so loud that, in the silence of the night, his voice seemed to resound from Temple-bar to Fleet-ditch!" Lastly comes his solid-thinking, solid-feeding Thrale, the well-beloved man; with *Thralia*, a bright papilionaceous creature, whom the elephant loved to play with, and wave to and fro upon his trunk. Not to speak of a reverent Bozzy, for what need is there farther?—Or of the spiritual Luminaries, with tongue or pen, who made that age remarkable; or of Highland Lairds drinking, in fierce usquebaugh, "Your health, Toctor Shonson!"—Still less of many such as that poor "Mr. F. Lewis," older in date, of whose birth, death and whole terrestrial *res gestæ*, this only, and strange enough this actually, survives: "Sir, he lived in London, and hung loose upon society!" *Stat* PARVI *nominis umbra*.—

In his fifty-third year he is beneficed, by the royal bounty, with a Pension of three-hundred pounds. Loud clamour is always more or less insane: but probably the insanest of all loud clamours in the eighteenth century was this that was raised about Johnson's Pension. Men seem to be led by the noses: but in reality, it is by the ears,—as some ancient slaves were, who had their ears bored; or as some modern quadrupeds may be, whose ears are long. Very falsely was it said, "Names do not change Things." Names do change Things; nay for most part they are the only substance, which mankind can discern in Things. The whole sum that Johnson, during the remaining twenty-two years of his life, drew from the public funds of England, would have supported some Supreme Priest for about half

as many weeks; it amounts very nearly to the revenue of our poorest Church-Overseer for one twelvemonth. Of secular Administrators of Provinces, and Horse-subduers, and Game-destroyers, we shall not so much as speak: but who were the Primates of England, and the Primates of All England, during Johnson's days? No man has remembered. Again, is the Primate of all England something, or is he nothing? If something then what but the man who, in the supreme degree, teaches and spiritually edifies, and leads towards Heaven by guiding wisely through the Earth, the living souls that inhabit England? We touch here upon deep matters; which but remotely concern us, and might lead us into still deeper: clear, in the mean while, it is that the true Spiritual Edifier and Soul's-Father of all England was, and till very lately continued to be, the man named Samuel Johnson,—whom this scot-and-lot-paying world cackled reproachfully to see remunerated like a Supervisor of Excise!

If Destiny had beaten hard on poor Samuel, and did never cease to visit him too roughly, yet the last section of his Life might be pronounced victorious, and on the whole happy. He was not idle; but now no longer goaded-on by want; the light which had shone irradiating the dark haunts of Poverty, now illuminates the circles of Wealth, of a certain culture and elegant intelligence; he who had once been admitted to speak with Edmund Cave and Tobacco Browne, now admits a Reynolds and a Burke to speak with him. Loving friends are there; Listeners, even Answerers: the fruit of his long labours lies round him in fair legible Writings, of Philosophy, Eloquence, Morality, Philology; some excellent, all worthy and genuine Works; for which too, a deep, earnest murmur of thanks reaches him from all ends of his Fatherland. Nay there are works of Goodness, of undying Mercy, which even he has possessed the power to do: "What I gave I have; what I spent I had!" Early friends had long sunk into the grave; yet in his soul they ever lived, fresh and clear, with soft pious breathings towards them, not without a still hope of one day meeting them again in purer union. Such was Johnson's Life: the victorious Battle of a free, true Man. Finally he died the death of the free and true: a dark cloud of Death, solemn and not untinged with haloes of immortal Hope, "took him away," and our eyes could no longer behold him; but can still behold the trace

and impress of his courageous honest spirit, deep-legible in the World's Business, wheresoever he walked and was.

To estimate the quantity of Work that Johnson performed, how much poorer the World were had it wanted him, can, as in all such cases, never be accurately done; cannot, till after some longer space, be approximately done. All work is as seed sown; it grows and spreads, and sows itself anew, and so, in endless palingenesia, lives and works. To Johnson's Writings, good and solid, and still profitable as they are, we have already rated his Life and Conversation as superior. By the one and by the other, who shall compute what effects have been produced, and are still, and into deep Time, producing?

So much, however, we can already see: It is now some three quarters of a century that Johnson has been the Prophet of the English; the man by whose light the English people, in public and in private, more than by any other man's, have guided their existence. Higher light than that immediately *practical* one; higher virtue than an honest PRUDENCE, he could not then communicate; nor perhaps could they have received: such light, such virtue, however, he did communicate. How to thread this labyrinthic Time, the fallen and falling Ruin of Times; to silence vain Scruples, hold firm to the last the fragments of old Belief, and with earnest eye still discern some glimpses of a true path, and go forward thereon, "in a world where there is much to be done, and little to be known:" this is what Samuel Johnson, by act and word, taught his Nation; what his Nation received and learned of him, more than of any other. We can view him as the preserver and transmitter of whatsoever was genuine in the spirit of Toryism; which genuine spirit, it is now becoming manifest, must again embody itself in all new forms of Society, be what they may, that are to exist, and have continuance—elsewhere than on Paper. The *last* in many things, Johnson was the last genuine Tory; the last of Englishmen who, with strong voice and wholly-believing heart, preached the Doctrine of Standing still; who, without selfishness or slavishness, reverenced the existing Powers, and could assert the privileges of rank, though himself poor, neglected and plebeian; who had heart-devoutness with heart-hatred of cant, was orthodox-religious with his eyes open; and in all things and everywhere spoke out in plain English,

from a soul wherein jesuitism could find no harbour, and with the front and tone not of a diplomatist but of a man.

The last of the Tories was Johnson: not Burke, as is often said; Burke was essentially a Whig, and only, on reaching the verge of the chasm towards which Whiggism from the first was inevitably leading, recoiled; and like a man vehement rather than earnest, a resplendent far-sighted Rhetorician rather than a deep sure Thinker, recoiled with no measure, convulsively, and damaging what he drove back with him.

In a world which exists by the balance of Antagonisms, the respective merit of the Conservator and the Innovator must ever remain debatable. Great, in the mean while, and undoubted for both sides, is the merit of him who, in a day of Change, walks wisely, honestly. Johnson's aim was in itself an impossible one: this of stemming the eternal Flood of Time; of clutching all things, and anchoring them down, and saying, Move not!—how could it or should it, ever have success? The strongest man can but retard the current partially and for a short hour. Yet even in such shortest retardation may not an inestimable value lie? If England has escaped the blood-bath of a French Revolution; and may yet, in virtue of this delay and of the experience it has given, work out her deliverance calmly into a new Era, let Samuel Johnson, beyond all contemporary or succeeding men, have the praise for it. We said above that he was appointed to be Ruler of the British Nation for a season: whoso will look beyond the surface, into the heart of the world's movements, may find that all Pitt Administrations, and Continental Subsidies, and Waterloo victories, rested on the possibility of making England, yet a little while, *Toryish*, Loyal to the Old; and this again on the anterior reality, that the Wise had found such Loyalty still practicable, and recommendable. England had its Hume, as France had its Voltaires and Diderots; but the Johnson was peculiar to us.

If we ask now, by what endowment it mainly was that Johnson realized such a Life for himself and others; what quality of character the main phenomena of his Life may be most naturally deduced from, and his other qualities most naturally subordinated to, in our conception of him, perhaps the answer were: The quality of Courage, of Valour; that Johnson was a Brave Man. The Courage that can go forth, once and away, to Chalk-Farm, and have itself shot, and

snuffed out, with decency, is nowise wholly what we mean here. Such courage we indeed esteem an exceeding small matter; capable of coexisting with a life full of falsehood, feebleness, poltroonery and despicability. Nay oftener it is Cowardice rather that produces the result: for consider, Is the Chalk-Farm Pistoleer inspired with any reasonable Belief and Determination; or is he hounded-on by haggard indefinable Fear,—how he will be *cut* at public places, and "plucked geese of the neighbourhood" will wag their tongues at him a plucked goose? If he go then, and be shot without shrieking or audible uproar, it is well for him: nevertheless there is nothing amazing in it. Courage to manage all this has not perhaps been denied to any man, or to any woman. Thus, do not recruiting sergeants drum through the streets of manufacturing towns, and collect ragged losels enough; every one of whom, if once dressed in red, and trained a little, will receive fire cheerfully for the small sum of one shilling *per diem*, and have the soul blown out of him at last, with perfect propriety? The Courage that dares only *die* is on the whole no sublime affair; necessary indeed, yet universal; pitiful when it begins to parade itself. On this Globe of ours there are some thirty-six persons that manifest it, seldom with the smallest failure, during every second of time. Nay look at Newgate: do not the offscourings of Creation, when condemned to the gallows as if they were not men but vermin, walk thither with decency, and even to the scowls and hootings of the whole Universe, give their stern good-night in silence? What is to be undergone only once, we may undergo; what must be, comes almost of its own accord. Considered as Duellist, what a poor figure does the fiercest Irish Whiskerando make in comparison with any English Game-cock, such as you may buy for fifteenpence!

The Courage we desire and prize is not the Courage to die decently, but to live manfully. This, when by God's grace it has been given, lies deep in the soul; like genial heat, fosters all other virtues and gifts; without it they could not live. In spite of our innumerable Waterloos and Peterloos, and such campaigning as there has been, this Courage we allude to, and call the only true one, is perhaps rarer in these last ages than it has been in any other since the Saxon Invasion under Hengist. Altogether extinct it can never be among men; otherwise the species Man were no longer for this world: here and there, in all times, under various guises,

men are sent hither not only to demonstrate but exhibit it, and testify, as from heart to heart, that it is still possible, still practicable.

Johnson, in the eighteenth century, and as Man of Letters, was one of such; and, in good truth, "the bravest of the brave." What mortal could have more to war with? Yet, as we saw, he yielded not, faltered not; he fought, and even, such was his blessedness, prevailed. Whoso will understand what it is to have a man's heart may find that, since the time of John Milton, no braver heart had beat in any English bosom than Samuel Johnson now bore. Observe too that he never called himself brave, never felt himself to be so; the more completely *was* so. No Giant Despair, no Golgotha Death-dance or Sorcerer's-Sabbath of "Literary Life in London," appals this pilgrim; he works resolutely for deliverance; in still defiance steps stoutly along. The thing that is given him to do, he can make himself do; what is to be endured, he can endure in silence.

How the great soul of old Samuel, consuming daily his own bitter unalleviable allotment of misery and toil, shows beside the poor flimsy little soul of young Boswell; one day flaunting in the ring of vanity, tarrying by the wine-cup and crying, Aha, the wine is red; the next day deploring his down-pressed, night-shaded, quite poor estate, and thinking it unkind that the whole movement of the Universe should go on, while *his* digestive-apparatus had stopped! We reckon Johnson's "talent of silence" to be among his great and too rare gifts. Where there is nothing farther to be done, there shall nothing farther be said: like his own poor blind Welsh-woman, he accomplished somewhat, and also "endured fifty years of wretchedness with unshaken fortitude." How grim was Life to him; a sick Prison-house and Doubting-castle! "His great business," he would profess, "was to escape from himself." Yet towards all this he has taken his position and resolution; can dismiss it all "with frigid indifference, having little to hope or to fear." Friends are stupid, and pusillanimous, and parsimonious; "wearied of his stay, yet offended at his departure:" it is the manner of the world. "By popular delusion," remarks he with a gigantic calmness, "illiterate writers will rise into renown:" it is portion of the History of English Literature; a perennial thing, this same popular delusion; and will—alter the character of the Language.

Closely connected with this quality of Valour, partly as

springing from it, partly as protected by it, are the more recognizable qualities of Truthfulness in word and thought, and Honesty in action. There is a reciprocity of influence here: for as the realizing of Truthfulness and Honesty is the lifelight and great aim of Valour, so without Valour they cannot, in anywise, be realized. Now, in spite of all practical shortcomings, no one that sees into the significance of Johnson will say that his prime object was not Truth. In conversation, doubtless, you may observe him, on occasion, fighting as if for victory;—and must pardon these ebulliences of a careless hour, which were not without temptation and provocation. Remark likewise two things: that such prize-arguings were ever on merely superficial debatable questions; and then that they were argued generally by the fair laws of battle and logic-fence, by one cunning in that same. If their purpose was excusable, their effect was harmless, perhaps beneficial: that of taming noisy mediocrity, and showing it another side of a debatable matter; to see *both* sides of which was, for the first time, to see the Truth of it. In his Writings themselves are errors enough, crabbed prepossessions enough; yet these also of a quite extraneous and accidental nature, nowhere a wilful shutting of the eyes to the Truth. Nay, is there not everywhere a heartfelt discernment, singular, almost admirable, if we consider through what confused conflicting lights and hallucinations it had to be attained, of the highest everlasting Truth, and beginning of all Truths: this namely, that man is ever, and even in the age of Wilkes and Whitefield, a Revelation of God to man; and lives, moves and has his being in Truth only; is either true, or, in strict speech, *is* not at all?

Quite spotless, on the other hand, is Johnson's love of Truth, if we look at it as expressed in Practice, as what we have named Honesty of action. "Clear your mind of Cant;" *clear* it, throw Cant utterly away: such was his emphatic, repeated precept; and did not he himself faithfully conform to it? The Life of this man has been, as it were, turned inside out, and examined with microscopes by friend and foe; yet was there no Lie found in him. His Doings and Writings are not *shows* but *performances*: you may weigh them in the balance, and they will stand weight. Not a line, not a sentence is dishonestly done, is other than it pretends to be. Alas! and he wrote not out of inward inspiration, but to earn his wages: and with that grand

perennial tide of " popular delusion " flowing by ; in whose waters he nevertheless refused to fish, to whose rich oyster-beds the dive was too muddy for him. Observe, again, with what innate hatred of Cant, he takes for himself, and offers to others, the lowest possible view of his business, which he followed with such nobleness. Motive for writing he had none, as he often said, but money ; and yet he wrote *so*. Into the region of Poetic Art he indeed never rose ; there was no *ideal* without him avowing itself in his work : the nobler was that unavowed *ideal* which lay within him, and commanded saying, Work out thy Artisanship in the spirit of an Artist ! They who talk loudest about the dignity of Art, and fancy that they too are Artistic guild-brethren, and of the Celestials,—let them consider well what manner of man this was, who felt himself to be only a hired day-labourer. A labourer that was worthy of his hire ; that has laboured not as an eye-servant, but as one found faithful ! Neither was Johnson in those days perhaps wholly a unique. Time was when, for money, you might have ware : and needed not, in all departments, in that of the Epic Poem, in that of the Blacking-bottle, to rest content with the mere *persuasion* that you had ware. It was a happier time. But as yet the seventh Apocalyptic Bladder (of PUFFERY) had not been rent open,—to whirl and grind, as in a West-Indian Tornado, all earthly trades and things into wreck, and dust, and consummation,—and regeneration. Be it quickly, since it must be !—

That Mercy can dwell only with Valour, is an old sentiment or proposition ; which in Johnson again receives confirmation. Few men on record have had a more merciful, tenderly affectionate nature than old Samuel. He was called the Bear ; and did indeed too often look, and roar, like one ; being forced to it in his own defence : yet within that shaggy exterior of his there beat a heart warm as a mother's, soft as a little child's. Nay generally, his very roaring was but the anger of affection : the rage of a Bear, if you will ; but the Bear bereaved of her whelps. Touch his Religion, glance at the Church of England, or the Divine Right ; and he was upon you ! These things were his Symbols of all that was good and precious for men ; his very Ark of the Covenant : whoso laid hand on them tore asunder his heart of hearts. Not out of hatred to the opponent, but of love to the thing opposed, did Johnson grow cruel, fiercely contradictory : this is an important distinction never to be forgotten in

our censure of his conversational outrages. But observe also with what humanity, what openness of love, he can attach himself to all things: to a blind old woman, to a Doctor Levett, to a cat "Hodge." "His thoughts in the latter part of his life were frequently employed on his deceased friends; he often muttered these or suchlike sentences: 'Poor man! and then he died.'" How he patiently converts his poor home into a Lazaretto; endures, for long years, the contradiction of the miserable and unreasonable; with him unconnected, save that they had no other to yield them refuge! Generous old man! Worldly possession he has little; yet of this he gives freely; from his own hard-earned shilling, the halfpence for the poor, that "waited his coming out," are not withheld: the poor "waited the coming out" of one not quite so poor! A Sterne can write sentimentalities on Dead Asses: Johnson has a rough voice; but he finds the wretched Daughter of Vice fallen down in the streets; carries her home on his own shoulders, and like a good Samaritan gives help to the help-needing, worthy or unworthy. Ought not Charity, even in that sense, to cover a multitude of sins? No Penny-a-week Committee-Lady, no manager of Soup-Kitchens, dancer at Charity-Balls, was this rugged, stern-visaged man; but where, in all England, could there have been found another soul so full of Pity, a hand so heavenlike bounteous as his? The widow's mite, we know, was greater than all the other gifts.

Perhaps it is this divine feeling of Affection, throughout manifested, that principally attracts us towards Johnson. A true brother of men is he; and filial lover of the Earth; who, with little bright spots of Attachment, "where lives and works some loved one," has beautified "this rough solitary Earth into a peopled garden." Lichfield, with its mostly dull and limited inhabitants, is to the last one of the sunny islets for him: *Salve magna parens!* Or read those Letters on his Mother's death: what a genuine solemn grief and pity lies recorded there; a looking back into the Past, unspeakably mournful, unspeakably tender. And yet calm, sublime; for he must now act, not look: his venerated Mother has been taken from him; but he must now write a *Rasselas* to defray her funeral! Again in this little incident, recorded in his Book of Devotion, are not the tones of sacred Sorrow and Greatness deeper than in many a blank-verse Tragedy;—as, indeed, "the fifth act of a

Tragedy," though unrhymed, does " lie in every death-bed, were it a peasant's, and of straw : "

" Sunday, October 18, 1767. Yesterday, at about ten in the morning, I took my leave forever of my dear old friend, Catherine Chambers, who came to live with my mother about 1724, and has been but little parted from us since. She buried my father, my brother and my mother. She is now fifty-eight years old.

" I desired all to withdraw ; then told her that we were to part forever ; that as Christians, we should part with prayer ; and that I would, if she was willing, say a short prayer beside her. She expressed great desire to hear me ; and held up her poor hands as she lay in bed, with great fervour, while I prayed kneeling by her. . . .

" I then kissed her. She told me that to part was the greatest pain she had ever felt, and that she hoped we should meet again in a better place. I expressed, with swelled eyes and great emotion of tenderness, the same hopes. We kissed and parted ; I humbly hope, to meet again, and to part no more."

Tears trickling down the granite rock : a soft well of Pity springs within !—Still more tragical is this other scene : " Johnson mentioned that he could not in general accuse himself of having been an undutiful son. ' Once, indeed,' said he, ' I was disobedient : I refused to attend my father to Uttoxeter market. Pride was the source of that refusal, and the remembrance of it was painful. A few years ago I desired to atone for this fault.' "—But by what method ? —What method was now possible ? Hear it ; the words are again given as his own, though here evidently by a less capable reporter :

" Madam, I beg your pardon for the abruptness of my departure in the morning, but I was compelled to it by conscience. Fifty years ago, Madam, on this day, I committed a breach of filial piety. My father had been in the habit of attending Uttoxeter market, and opening a stall there for the sale of his Books. Confined by indisposition, he desired me, that day, to go and attend the stall in his place. My pride prevented me ; I gave my father a refusal. —And now to-day I have been at Uttoxeter ; I went into the market at the time of business, uncovered my head, and

stood with it bare, for an hour, on the spot where my father's stall used to stand. In contrition I stood, and I hope the penance was expiatory."

Who does not figure to himself this spectacle, amid the "rainy weather, and the sneers," or wonder, "of the by-standers"? The memory of old Michael Johnson, rising from the far distance; sad-beckoning in the "moonlight of memory:" how he had toiled faithfully hither and thither; patiently among the lowest of the low; been buffeted and beaten down, yet ever risen again, ever tried it anew—And oh, when the wearied old man, as Bookseller, or Hawker, or Tinker, or whatsoever it was that Fate had reduced him to, begged help of *thee* for one day,—how savage, diabolic, was that mean Vanity, which answered, No! He sleeps now; after life's fitful fever, he sleeps well: but thou, O Merciless, how now wilt thou still the sting of that remembrance?—The picture of Samuel Johnson standing bareheaded in the market there, is one of the grandest and saddest we can paint. Repentance! Repentance! he proclaims, as with passionate sobs: but only to the ear of Heaven, if Heaven will give him audience: the earthly ear and heart, that should have heard it, are now closed, unresponsive forever.

That this so keen-loving, soft-trembling Affectionateness, the inmost essence of his being, must have looked forth, in one form or another, through Johnson's whole character, practical and intellectual, modifying both, is not to be doubted. Yet through what singular distortions and superstitions, moping melancholies, blind habits, whims about "entering with the right foot," and "touching every post as he walked along;" and all the other mad chaotic lumber of a brain that, with sun-clear intellect, hovered forever on the verge of insanity,—must that same inmost essence have looked forth; unrecognizable to all but the most observant! Accordingly it was not recognized; Johnson passed not for a fine nature, but for a dull, almost brutal one. Might not, for example, the first-fruit of such a Lovingness, coupled with his quick Insight, have been expected to be a peculiarly courteous demeanour as man among men? In Johnson's "Politeness," which he often, to the wonder of some, asserted to be great, there was indeed somewhat that needed explanation. Nevertheless, if he insisted always on handing lady-visitors to their carriage; though with the certainty of collecting a mob of gazers in Fleet Street,—as might well

be, the beau having on, by way of court-dress, " his rusty brown morning suit, a pair of old shoes for slippers, a little shrivelled wig sticking on the top of his head, and the sleeves of his shirt and the knees of his breeches hanging loose : "—in all this we can see the spirit of true Politeness, only shining through a strange medium. Thus again, in his apartments, at one time, there were unfortunately no chairs. " A gentleman who frequently visited him whilst writing his *Idlers*, constantly found him at his desk, sitting on one with three legs ; and on rising from it, he remarked that Johnson never forgot its defect ; but would either hold it in his hand, or place it with great composure against some support ; taking no notice of its imperfection to his visitor,"—who meanwhile, we suppose, sat upon folios, or in the sartorial fashion. " It was remarkable in Johnson," continues Miss Reynolds (*Renny dear*)," that no external circumstances ever prompted him to make any apology, or to seem even sensible of their existence. Whether this was the effect of philosophic pride, or of some partial notion of his respecting high-breeding, is doubtful." That it *was*, for one thing, the effect of genuine Politeness, is nowise doubtful. Not of the Pharisaical Brummellean Politeness, which would suffer crucifixion rather than ask twice for soup : but the noble universal Politeness of a man that knows the dignity of men, and feels his own ; such as may be seen in the patriarchal bearing of an Indian Sachem ; such as Johnson himself exhibited, when a sudden chance brought him into dialogue with his King. To us, with our view of the man, it nowise appears " strange " that he should have boasted himself cunning in the laws of Politeness ; nor " stranger still," habitually attentive to practise them.

More legibly is this influence of the Loving heart to be traced in his intellectual character. What, indeed, is the beginning of intellect, the first inducement to the exercise thereof, but attraction towards somewhat, *affection* for it ? Thus too, who ever saw, or will see, any true talent, not to speak of genius, the foundation of which is not goodness, love ? From Johnson's strength of Affection, we deduce many of his intellectual peculiarities ; especially that threatening array of perversions, known under the name of " Johnson's Prejudices." Looking well into the root from which these sprang, we have long ceased to view them with hostility, can pardon and reverently pity them. Consider with what force early-imbibed opinions must have clung

to a soul of this Affection. Those evil-famed Prejudices of his, that Jacobitism, Church-of-Englandism, hatred of the Scotch, belief in Witches, and suchlike, what were they but the ordinary beliefs of well-doing, well-meaning provincial Englishmen in that day? First gathered by his Father's hearth; round the kind "country fires" of native Staffordshire; they grew with his growth and strengthened with his strength: they were hallowed by fondest sacred recollections; to part with them was parting with his heart's blood. If the man who has no strength of Affection, strength of Belief, have no strength of Prejudice, let him thank Heaven for it, but to himself take small thanks.

Melancholy it was, indeed, that the noble Johnson could not work himself loose from these adhesions; that he could only purify them, and wear them with some nobleness. Yet let us understand how they grew out from the very centre of his being: nay moreover, how they came to cohere in him with what formed the business and worth of his Life, the sum of his whole Spiritual Endeavour. For it is on the same ground that he became throughout an Edifier and Repairer, not, as the others of his make were, a Puller-down; that in an age of universal Scepticism, England was still to produce its Believer. Mark too his candour even here; while a Dr. Adams, with placid surprise, asks, "Have we not evidence enough of the soul's immortality?" Johnson answers, "I wish for more."

But the truth is, in Prejudice, as in all things, Johnson was the product of England; one of those *good* yeomen whose limbs were made in England: alas, the last of *such* Invincibles, their day being now done! His culture is wholly English; that not of a Thinker but of a "Scholar:" his interests are wholly English; he sees and knows nothing but England; he is the John Bull of Spiritual Europe: let him live, love him, as he was and could not but be! Pitiable it is, no doubt, that a Samuel Johnson must confute Hume's irreligious Philosophy by some "story from a Clergyman of the Bishoprick of Durham;" should see nothing in the great Frederick but "Voltaire's lackey;" in Voltaire himself but a man *acerrimi ingenii, paucarum literarum*; in Rousseau but one worthy to be hanged; and in the universal, long-prepared, inevitable Tendency of European Thought but a green-sick milkmaid's crotchet of, for variety's sake, "milking the Bull." Our good, dear John! Observe too what it is that he sees in the city of Paris: no feeblest glimpse of

those D'Alemberts and Diderots, or of the strange questionable work they did ; solely some Benedictine Priests, to talk kitchen-latin with them about *Editiones Principes*. "*Monsheer Nongtongpaw !*"—Our dear, foolish John : yet is there a lion's heart within him !—Pitiable all these things were, we say ; yet nowise inexcusable ; nay, as basis or as foil to much else that was in Johnson, almost venerable. Ought we not, indeed, to honour England, and English Institutions and Way of Life, that they could still equip such a man ; could furnish him in heart and head to be a Samuel Johnson, and yet to love them, and unyieldingly fight for them ? What truth and living vigour must such Institutions once have had, when, in the middle of the Eighteenth Century, there was still enough left in them for this !

It is worthy of note that, in our little British Isle, the two grand Antagonisms of Europe should have stood embodied, under their very highest concentration, in two men produced simultaneously among ourselves. Samuel Johnson and David Hume, as was observed, were children nearly of the same year : through life they were spectators of the same Life-movement ; often inhabitants of the same city. Greater contrast, in all things, between two great men, could not be. Hume, well-born, competently provided for, whole in body and mind, of his own determination forces a way into Literature : Johnson, poor, moonstruck, diseased, forlorn, is forced into it " with the bayonet of necessity at his back." And what a part did they severally play there ! As Johnson became the father of all succeeding Tories ; so was Hume the father of all succeeding Whigs, for his own Jacobitism was but an accident, as worthy to be named Prejudice as any of Johnson's. Again, if Johnson's culture was exclusively English ; Hume's, in Scotland, became European ;—for which reason too we find his influence spread deeply over all quarters of Europe, traceable deeply in all speculation, French, German, as well as domestic ; while Johnson's name, out of England, is hardly anywhere to be met with. In spiritual stature they are almost equal ; both great, among the greatest : yet how unlike in likeness ! Hume has the widest, methodizing, comprehensive eye ; Johnson the keenest for perspicacity and minute detail : so had, perhaps chiefly, their education ordered it. Neither of the two rose into Poetry ; yet both to some approximation thereof : Hume to something of an Epic clearness and method, as in his delineation of the Commonwealth Wars ;

Johnson to many a deep Lyric tone of plaintiveness and impetuous graceful power, scattered over his fugitive compositions. Both, rather to the general surprise, had a certain rugged Humour shining through their earnestness: the indication, indeed, that they *were* earnest men, and had *subdued* their wild world into a kind of temporary home and safe dwelling. Both were, by principle and habit, Stoics; yet Johnson with the greater merit, for he alone had very much to triumph over; farther, he alone ennobled his Stoicism into Devotion. To Johnson Life was as a Prison, to be endured with heroic faith: to Hume it was little more than a foolish Bartholomew-Fair Show-booth, with the foolish crowdings and elbowings of which it was not worth while to quarrel; the whole would break up, and be at liberty, so *soon*. Both realized the highest task of Manhood, that of living like men; each died not unfitly, in his way: Hume as one, with factitious, half-false gaiety, taking leave of what was itself wholly but a Lie: Johnson as one, with awe-struck, yet resolute and piously expectant heart, taking leave of a Reality, to enter a Reality still higher. Johnson had the harder problem of it, from first to last: whether, with some hesitation, we can admit that he was intrinsically the better-gifted, may remain undecided.

These two men now rest; the one in Westminster Abbey here; the other in the Calton-Hill Churchyard of Edinburgh. Through Life they did not meet: as contrasts, "like in unlike," love each other; so might they two have loved, and communed kindly,—had not the terrestrial dross and darkness that was in them withstood! One day, their spirits, what Truth was in each, will be found working, living in harmony and free union, even here below. They were the two half-men of their time: whoso should combine the intrepid Candour and decisive scientific Clearness of Hume, with the Reverence, the Love and devout Humility of Johnson, were the whole man of a new time. Till such whole man arrive for us, and the distracted time admit of such, might the Heavens but bless poor England with half-men worthy to tie the shoe-latchets of these, resembling these even from afar! Be both attentively regarded, let the true Effort of both prosper;—and for the present, both take our affectionate farewell!

ON HISTORY

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[1830]

Clio was figured by the ancients as the eldest daughter of Memory, and chief of the Muses ; which dignity, whether we regard the essential qualities of her art, or its practice and acceptance among men, we shall still find to have been fitly bestowed. History, as it lies at the root of all science, is also the first distinct product of man's spiritual nature ; his earliest expression of what can be called Thought. It is a looking both before and after ; as, indeed, the coming Time already waits, unseen, yet definitely shaped, predetermined and inevitable, in the Time come ; and only by the combination of both is the meaning of either completed. The Sibylline Books, though old, are not the oldest. Some nations have prophecy, some have not : but of all mankind, there is no tribe so rude that it has not attempted History, though several have not arithmetic enough to count Five. History has been written with quipo-threads, with feather-pictures, with wampum-belts ; still oftener with earth-mounds and monumental stone-heaps, whether as pyramid or cairn ; for the Celt and the Copt, the Red man as well as the White, lives between two eternities, and warring against Oblivion, he would fain unite himself in clear conscious relation, as in dim unconscious relation he is already united, with the whole Future and the whole Past.

A talent for History may be said to be born with us, as our chief inheritance. In a certain sense all men are historians. Is not every memory written quite full with Annals, wherein joy and mourning, conquest and loss manifoldly alternate ; and, with or without philosophy, the whole fortunes of one little inward Kingdom, and all its politics, foreign and domestic, stand ineffaceably recorded ? Our very speech is curiously historical. Most men, you may observe, speak only to narrate ; not in imparting what they have thought,

which indeed were often a very small matter, but in exhibiting what they have undergone or seen, which is a quite unlimited one, do talkers dilate. Cut us off from Narrative, how would the stream of conversation, even among the wisest, languish into detached handfuls, and among the foolish utterly evaporate! Thus, as we do nothing but enact History, we say little but recite it: nay rather, in that widest sense, our whole spiritual life is built thereon. For, strictly considered, what is all Knowledge too but recorded Experience, and a product of History; of which, therefore, Reasoning and Belief, no less than Action and Passion, are essential materials?

Under a limited, and the only practicable shape, History proper, that part of History which treats of remarkable action, has, in all modern as well as ancient times, ranked among the highest arts, and perhaps never stood higher than in these times of ours. For whereas, of old, the charm of History lay chiefly in gratifying our common appetite for the wonderful, for the unknown; and her office was but as that of a Minstrel and Storyteller, she has now farther become a Schoolmistress, and professes to instruct in gratifying. Whether, with the stateliness of that venerable character, she may not have taken up something of its austerity and frigidity; whether in the logical terseness of a Hume or Robertson, the graceful ease and gay pictorial heartiness of a Herodotus or Froissart may not be wanting, is not the question for us here. Enough that all learners, all inquiring minds of every order, are gathered round her footstool, and reverently pondering her lessons, as the true basis of Wisdom. Poetry, Divinity, Politics, Physics, have each their adherents and adversaries; each little guild supporting a defensive and offensive war for its own special domain; while the domain of History is as a Free Emporium, where all these belligerents peaceably meet and furnish themselves; and Sentimentalist and Utilitarian, Sceptic and Theologian, with one voice advise us: Examine History, for it is "Philosophy teaching by Experience."

Far be it from us to disparage such teaching, the very attempt at which must be precious. Neither shall we too rigidly inquire: How much it has hitherto profited? Whether most of what little practical wisdom men have, has come from study of professed History, or from other less boasted sources, whereby, as matters now stand, a Marlborough may become great in the world's business with no

History save what he derives from Shakspeare's Plays? Nay, whether in that same teaching by Experience, historical Philosophy has yet properly deciphered the first element of all science in this kind: What the aim and significance of that wondrous changeful Life it investigates and paints may be? Whence the course of man's destinies in this Earth originated, and whither they are tending? Or, indeed, if they have any course and tendency, are really guided forward by an unseen mysterious Wisdom, or only circle in blind mazes without recognizable guidance? Which questions, altogether fundamental, one might think, in any Philosophy of History, have since the era when Monkish Annalists were wont to answer them by the long-ago extinguished light of their Missal and Breviary, been by most philosophical Historians only glanced at dubiously and from afar; by many, not so much as glanced at.

The truth is, two difficulties, never wholly surmountable, lie in the way. Before Philosophy can teach by Experience, the Philosophy has to be in readiness, the Experience must be gathered and intelligibly recorded. Now, overlooking the former consideration, and with regard only to the latter, let any one who has examined the current of human affairs, and how intricate, perplexed, unfathomable, even when seen into with our own eyes, are their thousandfold blending movements, say whether the true representing of it is easy or impossible. Social Life is the aggregate of all the individual men's Lives who constitute society; History is the essence of innumerable Biographies. But if one Biography, nay our own Biography, study and recapitulate it as we may, remains in so many points unintelligible to us; how much more must these million, the very facts of which, to say nothing of the purport of them, we know not, and cannot know!

Neither will it adequately avail us to assert that the general inward condition of Life is the same in all ages; and that only the remarkable deviations from the common endowment and common lot, and the more important variations which the outward figure of Life has from time to time undergone, deserve memory and record. The inward condition of Life, it may rather be affirmed, the conscious or half-conscious aim of mankind, so far as men are not mere digesting-machines, is the same in no two ages; neither are the more important outward variations easy to fix on, or always well capable of representation. Which was the greatest

innovator, which was the more important personage in man's history, he who first led armies over the Alps, and gained the victories of Cannæ and Thrasymene; or the nameless boor who first hammered out for himself an iron spade? When the oak-tree is felled, the whole forest echoes with it; but a hundred acorns are planted silently by some unnoticed breeze. Battles and war-tumults, which for the time din every ear, and with joy or terror intoxicate every heart, pass away like tavern-brawls; and, except some few Marathons and Morgartens, are remembered by accident, not by desert. Laws themselves, political Constitutions, are not our Life, but only the house wherein our Life is led: nay they are but the bare walls of the house; all whose essential furniture, the inventions and traditions, and daily habits that regulate and support our existence, are the work not of Dracos and Hampdens, but of Phœnician mariners, of Italian masons and Saxon metallurgists, of philosophers, alchymists, prophets, and all the long-forgotten train of artists and artisans; who from the first have been jointly teaching us how to think and how to act, how to rule over spiritual and over physical Nature. Well may we say that of our History the more important part is lost without recovery; and,—as thanksgivings were once wont to be offered "for unrecognized mercies,"—look with reverence into the dark untenanted places of the Past, where, in formless oblivion, our chief benefactors, with all their sedulous endeavours, but not with the fruit of these, lie entombed.

So imperfect is that same Experience, by which Philosophy is to teach. Nay, even with regard to those occurrences which do stand recorded, which, at their origin, have seemed worthy of record, and the summary of which constitutes what we now call History, is not our understanding of them altogether incomplete; is it even possible to represent them as they were? The old story of Sir Walter Raleigh's looking from his prison-window, on some street tumult, which afterwards three witnesses reported in three different ways, himself differing from them all, is still a true lesson for us. Consider how it is that historical documents and records originate; even honest records, where the reporters were unbiased by personal regard; a case which, were nothing more wanted, must ever be among the rarest. The real leading features of a historical Transaction, those movements that essentially characterize it, and alone deserve to be recorded, are nowise the foremost to be noted.

At first, among the various witnesses, who are also parties interested, there is only vague wonder, and fear or hope, and the noise of Rumour's thousand tongues; till, after a season, the conflict of testimonies has subsided into some general issue; and then it is settled by majority of votes, that such and such a "Crossing of the Rubicon," an "Impeachment of Strafford," a "Convocation of the Notables," are epochs in the world's history, cardinal points on which grand world-revolutions have hinged. Suppose, however, that the majority of votes was all wrong; that the real cardinal points lay far deeper; and had been passed over unnoticed, because no Seer, but only mere Onlookers, chanced to be there! Our clock strikes when there is a change from hour to hour; but no hammer in the Horologe of Time peals through the universe when there is a change from Era to Era. Men understand not what is among their hands: as calmness is the characteristic of strength, so the weightiest causes may be most silent. It is, in no case, the real historical Transaction, but only some more or less plausible scheme and theory of the Transaction, or the harmonized result of many such schemes, each varying from the other and all varying from truth, that we can ever hope to behold.

Nay, were our faculty of insight into passing things never so complete, there is still a fatal discrepancy between our manner of observing these, and their manner of occurring. The most gifted man can observe, still more can record, only the *series* of his own impressions: his observation, therefore, to say nothing of its other imperfections, must be *successive*, while the things done were often *simultaneous*; the things done were not a series, but a group. It is not in acted, as it is in written History: actual events are nowise so simply related to each other as parent and offspring are; every single event is the offspring not of one, but of all other events, prior or contemporaneous, and will in its turn combine with all others to give birth to new: it is an ever-living, ever-working Chaos of Being, wherein shape after shape bodies itself forth from innumerable elements. And this Chaos, boundless as the habitation and duration of man, unfathomable as the soul and destiny of man, is what the historian will depict, and scientifically gauge, we may say, by threading it with single lines of a few ells in length! For as all Action is, by its nature, to be figured as extended in breadth and in depth, as well as in length that is to say,

is based on Passion and Mystery, if we investigate its origin ; and spreads abroad on all hands, modifying and modified ; as well as advances towards completion,—so all Narrative is, by its nature, of only one dimension ; only travels forward towards one, or towards successive points : Narrative is *linear*, Action is *solid*. Alas for our " chains," or chainlets, of " causes and effects," which we so assiduously track through certain hand-breadths of years and square miles, when the whole is a broad, deep Immensity, and each atom is " chained " and complected with all ! Truly, if History is Philosophy teaching by Experience, the writer fitted to compose History is hitherto an unknown man. The Experience itself would require All-knowledge to record it,—were the All-wisdom needful for such Philosophy as would interpret it, to be had for asking. Better were it that mere earthly Historians should lower such pretensions, more suitable for Omniscience than for human science ; and aiming only at some picture of the things acted, which picture itself will at best be a poor approximation, leave the inscrutable purport of them an acknowledged secret ; or at most, in reverent Faith, far different from that teaching of Philosophy, pause over the mysterious vestiges of Him, whose path is in the great deep of Time, whom History indeed reveals, but only all History, and in Eternity, will clearly reveal.

Such considerations truly were of small profit, did they, instead of teaching us vigilance and reverent humility in our inquiries into History, abate our esteem for them, or discourage us from unweariedly prosecuting them. Let us search more and more into the Past ; let all men explore it, as the true fountain of knowledge ; by whose light alone, consciously or unconsciously employed, can the Present and the Future be interpreted or guessed at. For though the whole meaning lies far beyond our ken ; yet in that complex Manuscript, covered over with formless inextricably-entangled unknown characters,—nay which is a *Palimpsest*, and had once prophetic writing, still dimly legible there,—some letters, some words, may be deciphered ; and if no complete Philosophy, here and there an intelligible precept, available in practice, be gathered : well understanding, in the meanwhile, that it is only a little portion we have deciphered ; that much still remains to be interpreted ; that History is a real Prophetic Manuscript, and can be fully interpreted by no man.

But the Artist in History may be distinguished from the

Artisan in History ; for here, as in all other provinces, there are Artists and Artisans ; men who labour mechanically in a department, without eye for the Whole, not feeling that there is a Whole ; and men who inform and ennoble the humblest department with an Idea of the Whole, and habitually know that only in the Whole is the Partial to be truly discerned. The proceedings and the duties of these two, in regard to History, must be altogether different. Not, indeed, that each has not a real worth, in his several degree. The simple husbandman can till his field, and by knowledge he has gained of its soil, sow it with the fit grain, though the deep rocks and central fires are unknown to him : his little crop hangs under and over the firmament of stars, and sails through whole untracked celestial spaces, between Aries and Libra ; nevertheless it ripens for him in due season, and he gathers it safe into his barn. As a husbandman he is blameless in disregarding those higher wonders ; but as a thinker, and faithful inquirer into Nature, he were wrong. So likewise is it with the Historian, who examines some special aspect of History ; and from this or that combination of circumstances, political, moral, economical, and the issues it has led to, infers that such and such properties belong to human society, and that the like circumstances will produce the like issue ; which inference, if other trials confirm it, must be held true and practically valuable. He is wrong only, and an artisan, when he fancies that these properties, discovered or discoverable, exhaust the matter ; and sees not, at every step, that it is inexhaustible.

However, that class of cause-and-effect speculators, with whom no wonder would remain wonderful, but all things in Heaven and Earth must be computed and "accounted for ;" and even the Unknown, the Infinite in man's Life, had under the words *enthusiasm, superstition, spirit of the age* and so forth, obtained, as it were, an algebraical symbol and given value,—have now wellnigh played their part in European culture ; and may be considered, as in most countries, even in England itself where they linger the latest, verging towards extinction. He who reads the inscrutable Book of Nature as if it were a Merchant's Ledger, is justly suspected of having never seen that Book, but only some school Synopsis thereof ; from which, if taken for the real Book, more error than insight is to be derived.

Doubtless also, it is with a growing feeling of the infinite nature of History, that in these times, the old principle,

division of labour, has been so widely applied to it. The Political Historian, once almost the sole cultivator of History, has now found various associates, who strive to elucidate other phases of human Life ; of which, as hinted above, the political conditions it is passed under are but one, and though the primary, perhaps not the most important, of the many outward arrangements. Of this Historian himself, moreover, in his own special department, new and higher things are beginning to be expected. From of old, it was too often to be reproachfully observed of him, that he dwelt with disproportionate fondness in Senate-houses, in Battle-fields, nay even in Kings' Antechambers ; forgetting, that far away from such scenes, the mighty tide of Thought and Action was still rolling on its wondrous course, in gloom and brightness ; and in its thousand remote valleys, a whole world of Existence, with or without an earthly sun of Happiness to warm it, with or without a heavenly sun of Holiness to purify and sanctify it, was blossoming and fading, whether the " famous victory " were won or lost. The time seems coming when much of this must be amended ; and he who sees no world but that of courts and camps ; and writes only how soldiers were drilled and shot, and how this ministerial conjuror out-conjured that other, and then guided, or at least held, something which he called the rudder of Government, but which was rather the spigot of Taxation, wherewith, in place of steering, he could tap, and the more cunningly the nearer the lees,—will pass for a more or less instructive Gazetteer, but will no longer be called a Historian.

However, the Political Historian, were his work performed with all conceivable perfection, can accomplish but a part, and still leaves room for numerous fellow-labourers. Foremost among these comes the Ecclesiastical Historian ; endeavouring, with catholic or sectarian view, to trace the progress of the Church ; of that portion of the social establishments, which respects our religious condition ; as the other portion does our civil, or rather, in the long-run, our economical condition. Rightly conducted, this department were undoubtedly the more important of the two ; inasmuch as it concerns us more to understand how man's moral well-being had been and might be promoted, than to understand in the like sort his physical well-being ; which latter is ultimately the aim of all Political arrangements. For the physically happiest is simply the safest, the

strongest; and, in all conditions of Government, Power (whether of wealth as in these days, or of arms and adherents as in old days) is the only outward emblem and purchase-money of Good. True Good, however, unless we reckon Pleasure synonymous with it, is said to be rarely, or rather never, offered for sale in the market where that coin passes current. So that, for man's true advantage, not the outward condition of his life, but the inward and spiritual, is of prime influence; not the form of Government he lives under, and the power he can accumulate there, but the Church he is a member of, and the degree of moral elevation he can acquire by means of its instruction. Church History, then, did it speak wisely, would have momentous secrets to teach us: nay, in its highest degree, it were a sort of continued Holy Writ; our Sacred Books being, indeed, only a History of the primeval Church, as it first arose in man's soul, and symbolically embodied itself in his external life. How far our actual Church Historians fall below such unattainable standards, nay below quite attainable approximations thereto, we need not point out. Of the Ecclesiastical Historian we have to complain, as we did of his Political fellow-craftsman, that his inquiries turn rather on the outward mechanism, the mere hulls and superficial accidents of the object, than on the object itself: as if the Church lay in Bishops' Chapter-houses, and Ecumenic Council-halls, and Cardinals' Conclaves, and not far more in the hearts of Believing Men; in whose walk and conversation, as influenced thereby, its chief manifestations were to be looked for, and its progress or decline ascertained. The History of the Church is a History of the Invisible as well as of the Visible Church; which latter, if disjoined from the former, is but a vacant edifice; gilded, it may be, and overhung with old votive gifts, yet useless, nay pestilentially unclean; to write whose history is less important than to forward its downfall.

Of a less ambitious character are the Histories that relate to special separate provinces of human Action; to Sciences, Practical Arts, Institutions and the like; matters which do not imply an epitome of man's whole interest and form of life; but wherein, though each is still connected with all, the spirit of each, at least its material results, may be in some degree evolved without so strict a reference to that of the others. Highest in dignity and difficulty, under this head, would be our histories of Philosophy, of man's

opinions and theories respecting the nature of his Being, and relations to the Universe Visible and Invisible: which History, indeed, were it fitly treated, or fit for right treatment, would be a province of Church History; the logical or dogmatical province thereof; for Philosophy, in its true sense, is or should be the soul, of which Religion, Worship is the body; in the healthy state of things the Philosopher and Priest were one and the same. But Philosophy itself is far enough from wearing this character; neither have its Historians been men, generally speaking, that could in the smallest degree approximate it thereto. Scarcely since the rude era of the Magi and Druids has that same healthy identification of Priest and Philosopher had place in any country: but rather the worship of divine things, and the scientific investigation of divine things, have been in quite different hands, their relations not friendly but hostile. Neither have the Brückers and Bühles, to say nothing of the many unhappy Enfields who have treated of that latter department, been more than barren reporters, often unintelligent and unintelligible reporters, of the doctrine uttered; without force to discover how the doctrine originated, or what reference it bore to its time and country, to the spiritual position of mankind there and then. Nay, such a task did not perhaps lie before them, as a thing to be attempted.

Art also and Literature are intimately blended with Religion; as it were, outworks and abutments, by which that highest pinnacle in our inward world gradually connects itself with the general level, and becomes accessible therefrom. He who should write a proper History of Poetry, would depict for us the successive Revelations which man had obtained of the Spirit of Nature; under what aspects he had caught and endeavoured to body forth some glimpse of that unspeakable Beauty, which in its highest clearness is Religion, is the inspiration of a Prophet, yet in one or the other degree must inspire every true Singer, were his theme never so humble. We should see by what steps men had ascended to the Temple; how near they had approached; by what ill hap they had, for long periods, turned away from it, and grovelled on the plain with no music in the air, or blindly struggled towards other heights. That among all our Eichhorns and Wartons there is no such Historian, must be too clear to every one. Nevertheless let us not despair of far nearer approaches to

that excellence. Above all, let us keep the Ideal of it ever in our eye; for thereby alone have we even a chance to reach it.

Our histories of Laws and Constitutions, wherein many a Montesquieu and Hallam has laboured with acceptance, are of a much simpler nature; yet deep enough if thoroughly investigated; and useful, when authentic, even with little depth. Then we have Histories of Medicine, of Mathematics, of Astronomy, Commerce, Chivalry, Monkery; and Goguets and Beckmanns have come forward with what might be the most bountiful contribution of all, a History of Inventions. Of all which sorts, and many more not here enumerated, not yet devised, and put in practice, the merit and the proper scheme may, in our present limits, require no exposition.

In this manner, though, as above remarked, all Action is extended three ways, and the general sum of human Action is a whole Universe, with all limits of it unknown, does History strive by running path after path, through the Impassable, in manifold directions and intersections, to secure for us some oversight of the Whole; in which endeavour, if each Historian look well around him from his path, tracking it out with the *eye*, not, as is more common, with the *nose*, she may at last prove not altogether unsuccessful. Praying only that increased division of labour do not here, as elsewhere, aggravate our already strong Mechanical tendencies, so that in the manual dexterity for parts we lose all command over the whole, and the hope of any Philosophy of History be farther off than ever,—let us all wish her great and greater success.

COUNT CAGLIOSTRO

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IN TWO FLIGHTS

[1833]

FLIGHT FIRST

"THE life of every man," says our friend Herr Sauerteig, "the life even of the meanest man, it were good to remember, is a Poem; perfect in all manner of Aristotelean requisites; with beginning, middle and end; with perplexities, and solutions; with its Will-strength (*Willenkraft*) and warfare against Fate, its elegy and battle-singing, courage marred by crime, everywhere the two tragic elements of Pity and Fear; above all, with supernatural machinery enough,—for was not the man *born* out of NONENTITY; did he not *die*, and miraculously vanishing return thither? The most indubitable Poem! Nay, whoso will, may he not name it a Prophecy, or whatever else is highest in his vocabulary; since only in Reality lies the essence and foundation of all that was ever fabled, visioned, sung, spoken, or babbled by the human species; and the actual Life of Man includes in it all Revelations, true and false, that have been, are, or are to be. Man! I say therefore, *reverence thy fellow-man.* He too issued from Above; is mystical and supernatural (as thou namest it): this know thou of a truth. Seeing also that we ourselves are of so high Authorship, is not that, in very deed, 'the highest Reverence,' and most needful for us: 'Reverence for oneself'?

"Thus, to my view, is every Life, more properly is every Man that has life to lead, a small strophe, or occasional verse, composed by the Supernal Powers; and published, in such type and shape, with such embellishments, emblematic head-piece and tail-piece as thou seest, to the thinking

or unthinking Universe. Heroic strophes some few are; full of force and a sacred fire, so that to latest ages the hearts of those that read therein are made to tingle. Jeremiads others seem; mere weeping laments, harmonious or disharmonious Remonstrances against Destiny; whereat we too may sometimes profitably weep. Again, have we not flesh-and-blood strophes of the idyllic sort,—though in these days rarely, owing to Poor-Laws, Game-Laws, Population-Theories and the like! Farther, of the comic laughter-loving sort; yet ever with an unfathomable earnestness, as is fit, lying underneath: for, bethink thee, what is the mirthfulest grinning face of any Grimaldi, but a transitory *mask*, behind which quite otherwise grins —the most indubitable *Death's-head*! However, I say farther, there are strophes of the pastoral sort (as in Ettrick, Afghaunistan, and elsewhere); of the farcic-tragic, melodramatic, of all named and a thousand unnamable sorts there are poetic strophes, written, as was said, in Heaven, printed on Earth, and published (bound in woollen cloth, or *clothes*) for the use of the studious. Finally, a small number seem utter Pasquils, mere ribald libels on Humanity: these too, however, are at times worth reading.

"In this wise," continues our too obscure friend, "out of all imaginable elements, awakening all imaginable moods of heart and soul, 'barbarous enough to excite, tender enough to assuage,' ever contradictory yet ever coalescing, is that mighty world-old Rhapsodia of Existence page after page (generation after generation), and chapter (or epoch) after chapter, poetically put together! This is what some one names 'the grand sacred Epos, or Bible of World-History; infinite in meaning as the Divine Mind it emblems; wherein he is wise that can read here a line, and there a line.'

"Remark too, under another aspect, whether it is not in this same Bible of World-History that all men, in all times, with or without clear consciousness, have been unwearied to read, what we may call *read*; and again to write, or rather to be *written*! What is all History, and all Poesy, but a deciphering somewhat thereof, out of that mystic heaven-written Sanscrit; and rendering it into the speech of men? *Know thyself*, value thyself, is a moralist's commandment (which I only half approve of); but *Know others*, value others, is the hest of Nature herself. Or

again, *Work while it is called To-day* : is not that also the irreversible law of being for mortal man ? And now, what is all working, what is all knowing, but a faint interpreting and a faint showing-forth of that same *Mystery of Life*, which ever remains infinite,—heaven-written mystic Sanscrit ? View it as we will, to him that lives, Life is a divine matter ; felt to be of quite sacred significance. Consider the wretchedest ' straddling biped that wears breeches ' of thy acquaintance ; into whose wool-head, Thought, as thou rashly supposest, never entered ; who, in froth-element of business, pleasure, or what else he names it, walks forever in a vain show ; asking not Whence, or Why, or Whither ; looking up to Heaven above as if some upholsterer had made it, and down to the Hell beneath as if *he* had neither part nor lot there : yet tell me, does not he too, over and above his five finite senses, acknowledge some sixth *infinite* sense, were it only that of Vanity ? For, sate him in the other five as you may, will this sixth sense leave him rest ? Does he not rise early and sit late, and study impromptus, and (in constitutional countries) parliamentary motions, and bursts of eloquence, and gird himself in whalebone, and pad himself and perk himself, and in all ways painfully take heed to his goings ; feeling (if we must admit it) that an altogether infinite endowment has been intrusted him also, namely, a Life to lead ? Thus does he too, with his whole force, in his own way, proclaim that the world-old Rhapsodia of Existence is divine, and an inspired Bible ; and, himself a wondrous *verse* therein (be it heroic, be it pasquillic), study with his whole soul, as we said, both to *read* and to *be written* !

" Here also I will observe, that the *manner* in which men read this same Bible is like all else, proportionate to their stage of culture, to the circumstances of their environment. First, and among the earnest Oriental nations, it was read wholly like a Sacred Book ; most clearly by the most earnest, those wondrous Hebrew Readers ; whose reading accordingly was itself sacred, has meaning for all tribes of mortal men ; since ever, to the latest generation of the world, a true utterance from the innermost of man's being will speak significantly to man. But, again, in how different a style was that other Oriental reading of the Magi ; of Zerdusht, or whoever it was that first so opened the matter ? Gorgeous semi-sensual Grandeurs and Splendours : on infinite darkness, brightest-glowing light and

fire ;—of which, all defaced by Time, and turned mostly into lies, a quite late reflex, in those Arabian Tales and the like, still leads captive every heart. Look, thirdly, at the earnest West, and that Consecration of the Flesh, which stept forth life-lusty, radiant, smiling-earnest, in immortal grace, from under the chisel and the stylus of old Greece. Here too was the Infinite intelligibly proclaimed as infinite : and the antique man walked between a Tartarus and an Elysium, his brilliant Paphos-islet of Existence embraced by boundless oceans of sadness and fateful gloom.—Of which three antique manners of reading, our modern manner, you will remark, has been little more than imitation : for always, indeed, the West has been rifer of doers than of speakers. The Hebrew manner has had its echo in our Pulpits and choral aisles ; the Ethnic Greek and Arabian in numberless mountains of Fiction, rhymed, rhymeless, published by subscription, by puffery, in periodicals, or by money of your own (*durch eignes Geld*). Till now at last, by dint of iteration and reiteration through some ten centuries, all these manners have grown obsolete, wearisome, meaningless ; listened to only as the monotonous moaning wind, while there is nothing else to listen to : —and so now, well-nigh in total oblivion of the Infinitude of Life (except what small *unconscious* recognition the ' straddling biped ' above argued of may have), we wait, in hope and patience, for some *fourth* manner of anew convincingly announcing it."

These singular sentences from the *Æsthetische Springwurzeln* we have thought right to translate and quote, by way of proem and apology. We are here about to give some critical account of what Herr Sauerteig would call a " flesh-and-blood Poem of the purest Pasquil sort ; " in plain words, to examine the biography of the most perfect scoundrel that in these latter ages has marked the world's history. Pasquils too, says Sauerteig, " are at times worth reading." Or quitting that mystic dialect of his, may we not assert in our own way, that the history of an Original Man is always worth knowing ? So magnificent a thing is Will incarnated in a creature of like fashion with ourselves, we run to witness *all* manifestations thereof : what man soever has marked out a peculiar path of life for himself, let it lead this way or that way, and successfully travelled the same, of him we specially inquire, How he travelled ; What befell him on the journey ? Though the man were

a knave of the first water, this hinders not the question, How he managed his knavery? Nay it rather encourages such question; for nothing properly is wholly despicable, at once detestable and forgetable, but your half-knave, he who is neither true nor false; who never in his existence once spoke or did any true thing (for indeed his mind lives in twilight, with cat-vision, incapable of *discerning* truth); and yet had not the manfulness to speak or act any decided lie; but spent his whole life in plastering together the True and the False, and therefrom manufacturing the Plausible. Such a one our Transcendentals have defined as a Moral Hybrid and chimera; therefore, under the moral point of view, as an Impossibility, and mere deceptive Nonentity,—put together for commercial purposes. Of which sort, nevertheless, how many millions, through all manner of gradations, from the wielder of kings' sceptres to the vender of brimstone matches, at tea-tables, council-tables, behind shop-counters, in priests' pulpits, incessantly and everywhere, do now, in this world of ours, in this Isle of ours, offer themselves to view!

From such, at least from this intolerable over-proportion of such, might the merciful Heavens one day deliver us! Glorious, heroic, fruitful for his own Time, and for all Time and all Eternity, is the constant Speaker and Doer of Truth! If no such again, in the present generation, is to be vouchsafed us, let us have at least the melancholy pleasure of beholding a decided Liar. Wretched mortal, who with a single eye to be "respectable" forever sittest cobbling together two Inconsistencies, which stick not for an hour, but require ever new gluten and labour,—will it, by no length of experience, no bounty of Time or Chance, be revealed to thee that Truth is of Heaven, and Falsehood is of Hell; that if thou cast not from thee the one or the other, thy existence is wholly an Illusion and optical and tactual Phantasm; that properly thou existest not at all? Respectable! What, in the Devil's name, is the use of Respectability, with never so many gigs and silver spoons, if thou inwardly art the pitifulest of all men? I would thou wert either cold or hot.

One such desirable second-best, perhaps the chief of all such, we have here found in the Count Allessandro di Cagliostro, Pupil of the Sage Althotas, Foster-child of the Scherif of Mecca, probable Son of the last King of Trebisond; named also Acharat, and Unfortunate Child of

Nature; by profession healer of diseases, abolisher of wrinkles, friend of the poor and impotent, grand-master of the Egyptian Mason-lodge of High Science, Spirit-summoner, Gold-cook, Grand Cophta, Prophet, Priest, and thaumaturgic moralist and swindler; really a Liar of the first magnitude, thorough-paced in all provinces of lying, what one may call the King of Liars. Mendez Pinto, Baron Münchausen and others are celebrated in this art, and not without some colour of justice; yet must it in candour remain doubtful whether any of these comparatively were much more than liars from the teeth onwards: a perfect character of the species in question, who lied not in word only, nor in act and word only, but continually, in thought, word and act; and, so to speak, lived wholly in an element of lying, and from birth to death did nothing but lie,—was still a desideratum. Of which desideratum Count Alessandro offers, we say, if not the fulfilment, perhaps as near an approach to it as the limited human faculties permit. Not in the modern ages, probably not in the ancient (though these had their Autolycus, their Apollonius, and enough else), did any completer figure of this sort issue out of Chaos and Old Night: a sublime kind of figure, presenting himself with "the air of calm strength," of sure perfection in his art; whom the heart opens itself to, with wonder and a sort of welcome. "The only vice I know," says one, "is Inconsistency." At lowest, answer we, he that *does* his work shall have his work judged of. Indeed, if Satan himself has in these days become a poetic hero, why should not Cagliostro, for some short hour, be a prose one? "One first question," says a great Philosopher, "I ask of every man: Has he an aim, which with undivided soul he follows, and advances towards? Whether his aim is a right one or a wrong one, forms but my second question." Here, then, is a small "human Pasquil," not without poetic interest.

However, be this as it may, we apprehend the eye of science at least cannot view him with indifference. Doubtful, false as much is in Cagliostro's manner of being, of this there is no doubt, that starting from the lowest point of Fortune's wheel, he rose to a height universally notable; that, without external furtherance, money, beauty, bravery, almost without common sense, or any discernible worth whatever, he sumptuously supported, for a long course of years, the wants and digestion of one of the greediest

bodies, and one of the greediest minds; outwardly in his five senses, inwardly in his "sixth sense, that of vanity," nothing straitened. Clear enough it is, however much may be supposititious, that this japanned Chariot, rushing through the world, with dust-clouds and loud noise, at the speed of four swift horses, and topheavy with luggage, has an existence. The six Beef-eaters too, that ride prosperously heralding his advent, honourably escorting, menially waiting on him, are they not realities? Ever must the purse open, paying turnpikes, tavern-bills, drink-moneys, and the thousand-fold tear and wear of such a team; yet ever, like a horn-of-plenty, does it pour; and after brief rest, the chariot ceases not to roll. Whereupon rather pressingly arises the scientific question: How? Within that wonderful machinery, of horses, wheels, top-luggage, beef-eaters, sits only a gross, thickset Individual, evincing dulness enough; and by his side a Seraphina, with a look of doubtful reputation: how comes it that means still meet ends, that the whole Engine, like a steam-coach wanting fuel, does not stagnate, go silent, and fall to pieces in the ditch? Such question did the scientific curiosity of the present writer often put; and for many a day in vain.

Neither, indeed, as Book-readers know, was he peculiar herein. The great Schiller, for example, struck both with the poetic and the scientific phases of the matter, admitted the influences of the former to shape themselves anew within him; and strove with his usual impetuosity to burst (since unlocking was impossible) the secrets of the latter: and so his unfinished Novel, the *Geistersoher*, saw the light. Still more renowned is Goethe's Drama of the *Gross-Kophta*; which, as himself informs us, delivered him from a state of mind that had become alarming to certain friends; so deep was the hold this business, at one of its epochs, had taken of him. A dramatic Fiction, that of his, based on the strictest possible historical study and inquiry; wherein perhaps the faithfulest image of the historical Fact, as yet extant in any shape, lies in artistic miniature curiously unfolded. Nay mere Newspaper-readers, of a certain age, can bethink them of our London Egyptian Lodges of High Science; of the Countess Seraphina's dazzling jewelries, nocturnal brilliancies, sibyllic ministrations and revelations; of Miss Fry and Milord Scott, and Messrs. Priddle and the other shark *bailiffs*;

and Lord Mansfield's judgment-seat; the Comte d'Adhémar, the Diamond Necklace, and Lord George Gordon. For Cagliostro, hovering through unknown space, twice (perhaps thrice) lighted on our London, and did business in the great chaos there.

Unparalleled Cagliostro! Looking at thy so attractively decorated private theatre, wherein thou actedst and livedst, what hand but itches to draw aside thy curtain; overhaul thy paste-boards, paintpots, paper-mantles, stage-lamps, and turning the whole inside out, find *thee* in the middle thereof! For there of a truth wert thou: though the rest was all foam and sham, there sattest *thou*, as large as life, and as esurient; warring against the world, and indeed conquering the world, for it remained thy tributary, and yielded daily rations. Innumerable Sheriff's-officers, Exempts, Sbirri, Alguazils, of every European climate, were prowling on thy traces, their intents hostile enough; thyself wert single against them all; in the whole earth thou hadst no friend. What say we, in the whole earth? In the whole universe thou hadst no friend! Heaven knew nothing of thee; *could* in charity know nothing of thee; and as for Beelzebub, *his* friendship, it is ascertained, cannot count for much.

But to proceed with business. The present inquirer, in obstinate investigation of a phenomenon so noteworthy, has searched through the whole not inconsiderable circle which his tether (of circumstances, geographical position, trade, health, extent of money-capital) enables him to describe: and, sad to say, with the most imperfect results. He has read Books in various languages and jargons; feared not to soil his fingers, hunting through ancient dusty Magazines, to sicken his heart in any labyrinth of iniquity and imbecility; nay he had not grudged to dive even into the infectious *Mémoires de Casanova*, for a hint or two,—could he have found that work, which, however, most Librarians make a point of denying that they possess. A painful search, as through some spiritual pest-house; and then with such issue! The quantity of discoverable printing about Cagliostro (so much being burnt) is now not great; nevertheless in frightful proportion to the quantity of information given. Except vague Newspaper rumours and surmises, the things found written of this Quack are little more than temporary Manifestos, by himself, by gulled or gulling disciples of his: not true therefore; at

best only certain fractions of what he wished or expected the blinder Public to reckon true; misty, embroiled, for most part highly stupid; perplexing, even provoking; which can only be believed—to be, under such and such conditions, Lies. Of this sort emphatically is the English "*Life of the Count Cagliostro,* price three shillings and sixpence:" a Book indeed which one might hold (so fatuous, inane is it) to be some mere dream-vision and unreal eidolon, did it not now stand palpably there, as "Sold by T. Hookham, Bond Street, 1787;" and bear to be handled, spurned at and torn into pipe-matches. Some human creature doubtless was at the writing of it; but of what kind, country, trade, character or gender, you will in vain strive to fancy. Of like fabulous stamp are the *Mémoires pour le Comte de Cagliostro,* emitted, with *Requête à joindre,* from the Bastille, during that sorrowful business of the Diamond Necklace, in 1786; no less the *Lettre du Comte de Cagliostro au Peuple Anglais,* which followed shortly after, at London; from which two indeed, that fatuous inexplicable English *Life* has perhaps been mainly manufactured. Next come the *Mémoires authentiques pour servir à l'Histoire du Comte de Cagliostro,* twice printed in the same year 1786, at Strasburg and at Paris; a swaggering, lascivious Novelette, without talent, without truth or worth, happily of small size. So fares it with us: alas, all this is but the *outside* decorations of the private-theatre, or the sounding of catcalls and applauses from the stupid audience; nowise the interior bare walls and dress-room which we wanted to see! Almost our sole even half-genuine documents are a small barren pamphlet, *Cagliostro démasqué à Varsovie, en* 1780; and a small barren Volume purporting to be his *Life,* written at Rome, of which latter we have a French version, dated 1791. It is on this *Vie de Joseph Balsamo, connu sous le Nom de Comte Cagliostro,* that our main dependence must be placed; of which Work, meanwhile, whether it is wholly or only half-genuine, the reader may judge by one fact: that it comes to us through the medium of the Roman Inquisition, and the proofs to substantiate it lie in the Holy Office there. Alas, this reporting Familiar of the Inquisition was too probably something of a Liar; and he reports lying Confessions of one who was not so much a Liar as a Lie! In such enigmatic duskiness, and thrice-folded involution, after all inquiries, does the matter yet hang.

Nevertheless, by dint of meditation and comparison, light-points that stand fixed, and abide scrutiny, do here and there disclose themselves; diffusing a fainter light over what otherwise were dark, so that it is no longer invisible, but only dim. Nay after all, is there not in this same uncertainty a kind of fitness of poetic congruity? Much that would offend the eye stands discreetly lapped in shade. Here too Destiny has cared for her favourite: that a powder-nimbus of astonishment, mystification and uncertainty should still encircle the Quack of Quacks, is right and suitable; such was by Nature and Art his chosen uniform and environment. Thus, as formerly in Life, so now in History, it is in huge fluctuating smoke-whirlwinds, partially illumed into a most brazen glory, yet united, coalescing with the region of everlasting Darkness, in miraculous clear-obscure, that he works and rides.

"Stern Accuracy in inquiring, bold Imagination in expounding and filling-up; these," says friend Sauerteig, "are the two pinions on which History soars,"—or flutters and wabbles. To which two pinions let us and the readers of this Magazine now daringly commit ourselves. Or chiefly indeed to the *latter* pinion, of Imagination; which, if it be the *larger*, will indeed make an unequal flight! Meanwhile, the style at least shall if possible be equal to the subject.

Know then, that in the year 1743, in the city of Palermo, in Sicily, the family of Signor Pietro Balsamo, a shopkeeper, were exhilarated by the birth of a Boy. Such occurrences have now become so frequent, that, miraculous as they are, they occasion little astonishment: old Balsamo for a space, indeed, laid down his ellwands and unjust balances; but for the rest, met the event with equanimity. Of the possetings, junketings, gossipings, and other ceremonial rejoicings, transacted according to the custom of the country, for welcome to a New-comer, not the faintest tradition has survived; enough, that the small New-comer, hitherto a mere ethnic or heathen, is in a few days made a Christian of, or as we vulgarly say, christened; by the name Giuseppe. A fat, red, globular kind of fellow, not under nine pounds avoirdupois, the bold Imagination can figure him to be: if not proofs, there are indications that sufficiently betoken as much.

Of his teething and swaddling adventures, of his scaldings, squallings, pukings, purgings, the strictest search into

History can discover nothing; not so much as the epoch when he passed out of long-clothes stands noted in the fasti of Sicily. That same "larger pinion" of Imagination, nevertheless, conducts him from his native blind-alley, into the adjacent street *Casaro*; descries him, with certain contemporaries now unknown, essaying himself in small games of skill; watching what phenomena, of carriage-transits, dog-battles, street-music, or suchlike, the neighbourhood might offer (intent above all on any windfall of chance *provender*); now, with incipient scientific spirit, puddling in the gutters; now, as small poet (or maker), baking mud-pies. Thus does he tentatively coast along the outskirts of Existence, till once he shall be strong enough to land and make a footing there.

Neither does it seem doubtful that with the earliest exercise of speech, the gifts of simulation and dissimulation began to manifest themselves; Giuseppe, or Beppo as he was now called, could indeed speak the truth,—but only when he saw his advantage in it. Hungry also, as above hinted, he too-probably often was: a keen faculty of digestion, a meagre larder within doors; these two circumstances, so frequently conjoined in this world, reduced him to his inventions. As to the thing called Morals, and knowledge of Right and Wrong, it seems pretty certain that such knowledge, the sad fruit of Man's fall, had in great part been spared him; if he ever heard the commandment, *Thou shalt not steal*, he most probably could not believe in it, therefore could not obey it. For the rest, though of quick temper, and a ready striker where clear prospect of victory showed itself, we fancy him vociferous rather than bellicose, not prone to violence where stratagem will serve; almost pacific, indeed, had not his many wants necessitated him to many conquests. Above all things, a brazen impudence develops itself; the crowning gift of one born to scoundrelism. In a word, the fat thickset Beppo, as he skulks about there, plundering, playing dog's tricks, with his finger in every mischief, already gains character; shrill housewives of the neighbourhood, whose sausages he has filched, whose weaker sons maltreated, name him Beppo Maldetto, and indignantly prophesy that he will be hanged. A prediction which, as will be seen, the issue has signally falsified.

We hinted that the household larder was in a leanish

state; in fact, the outlook of the Balsamo family was getting troubled; old Balsamo had, during these things, been called away on his long journey. Poor man! The future eminence and preëminence of his Beppo he foresaw not, or what a world's-wonder he had thoughtlessly generated; as indeed, which of us, by much calculating, can sum-up the net-total (Utility, or Inutility) of any his most indifferent act,—a seed cast into the seedfield of TIME, to grow there, producing fruits or poisons, forever! Meanwhile Beppo himself gazed heavily into the matter; hung his thick lips while he saw his mother weeping; and, for the rest, eating what fat or sweet thing he could come at, let Destiny take its course.

The poor widow, ill-named *Felicità*, spinning out a painful livelihood by such means as only the poor and forsaken know, could not but many times cast an impatient eye on her brass-faced voracious Beppo; and ask him, If he never meant to turn himself to anything? A maternal uncle, of the moneyed sort (for he has uncles not without influence), has already placed him in the Seminary of St. Roch, to gain some tincture of schooling there: but Beppo feels himself misplaced in that sphere; "more than once runs away;" is flogged, snubbed, tyrannically checked on all sides; and finally, with such slender stock of schooling as had pleased to offer itself, returns to the street. The widow, as we said, urges him, the uncles urge: Beppo, wilt thou never turn thyself to anything? Beppo, with such speculative faculty, from such low watchtower as he commands, is in truth, being forced to it, from time to time, looking abroad into the world; surveying the conditions of mankind, therewith contrasting his own wishes and capabilities. Alas, his wishes are manifold; a most hot Hunger (in all kinds), as above hinted; but on the other hand, his leading capability seemed only the Power to Eat. What profession or condition, then? Choose; for it is time. Of all the terrestrial professions, that of Gentleman, it seemed to Beppo, had, under these circumstances, been most suited to his feelings: but then the outfit? the apprentice-fee? Failing which, he, with perhaps as much sagacity as one could expect, decides for the Ecclesiastical.

Behold him then, once more by the uncle's management, journeying, a chubby brass-faced boy of thirteen, beside the Reverend Father-General of the Benfratelli, to their

neighbouring Convent of Cartegirone, with intent to enter himself novice there. He has donned the novice-habit; is "intrusted to the keeping of the Convent-Apothecary," on whose gallipots and crucibles he looks round with wonder. Were it by accident that he found himself Apothecary's Famulus, were it by choice of his own—nay was it not, in either case, by *design* of Destiny, intent on perfecting her work?—Enough, in this Cartegirone Laboratory there awaited him, though as yet he knew it not, life-guidance and determination; the great want of every genius, even of the scoundrel-genius. He himself confesses that he here learned some (or, as he calls it, *the*) "principles of chemistry and medicine." Natural enough: new books of the Chemists lay here, old books of the Alchemists; distillations, sublimations visibly went on; discussions there were, oral and written, of gold-making, salve-making, treasure-digging, divining-rods, projection, and the alcahest: besides, had he not among his fingers calxes, acids, Leyden-jars? Some first elements of medico-chemical conjurorship, so far as phosphorescent mixtures, aqua-toffana, ipecacuanha, cantharides tincture, and suchlike would go, were now attainable; sufficient when the hour came, to set-up any average Quack, much more the Quack of Quacks. It is here, in this unpromising environment, that the seeds, therapeutic, thaumaturgic, of the Grand Cophta's stupendous workings and renown were sown.

Meanwhile, as observed, the environment looked unpromising enough. Beppo with his two endowments of Hunger and of Power to Eat, had made the best choice he could; yet, as it soon proved, a rash and disappointing one. To his astonishment, he finds that even here he "is in a conditional world;" and, if he will employ his capability of eating or enjoying, must first, in some measure, work and suffer. Contention enough hereupon: but now dimly arises or reproduces itself, the question, Whether there were not a *shorter* road, that of stealing? Stealing —under which, generically taken, you may include the whole art of scoundrelism; for what is Lying itself but a *theft* of my belief?—stealing, we say, is properly the North-West Passage to Enjoyment: while common Navigators sail painfully along torrid shores, laboriously doubling this or the other Cape of Hope, your adroit Thief-Parry, drawn on smooth dog-sledges, is already there and back again, The misfortune is, that stealing requires a talent; and

failure in that North-West voyage is more fatal than in any other. We hear that Beppo was "often punished:" painful experiences of the fate of genius; for all genius, by its nature, comes to disturb *somebody* in his ease, and your thief-genius more so than most!

Readers can now fancy the sensitive skin of Beppo mortified with prickly cilices, wealed by knotted thongs; his soul afflicted by vigils and forced fasts; no eye turned kindly on him; everywhere the bent of his genius rudely contravened. However, it is the first property of genius to grow in spite of contradiction, and even by means thereof;—as the vital germ pushes itself through the dull soil, and lives by what strove to bury it! Beppo, waxing into strength of bone and character, sets his face stiffly against persecutions, and is not a whit disheartened. On *such* chastisements and chastisers he can look with a certain genial disdain. Beyond convent-wall, with their sour stupid shavelings, lies Palermo, lies the world; here too is he, still alive,—though worse off than he wished; and feels that the world is his oyster, which he (by chemical or other means) will one day open. Nay, we find there is a touch of grim Humour unfolds itself in the youth; the surest sign, as is often said, of a character naturally great. Witness, for example, how he acts on this to his ardent temperament so trying occasion. While the monks sit at meat, the impetuous voracious Beppo (that stupid Inquisition-Biographer records it as a thing of course) is set not to eat with them, not to pick up the crumbs that fall from them, but to stand "reading the Martyrology" for their pastime! The brave adjusts himself to the inevitable. Beppo reads that dullest Martyrology of theirs; but reads out of it not what is printed there, but what his own vivid brain on the spur of the moment devises: instead of the names of Saints, all heartily indifferent to him, he reads out the names of the most notable Palermo "unfortunate-females," now beginning to interest him a little. What a "deep world-irony," as the Germans call it, lies here! The Monks, of course, felled him to the earth, and flayed him with scourges; but what did it avail? This only became apparent, to himself and them, that he had now outgrown their monk-discipline; as the Psyche does its chrysalis-shell, and bursts it. Giuseppe Balsamo bids farewell to Cartegirone forever and a day.

So now, by consent or not of the ghostly Benfratelli

(Friars of *Mercy*, as they were named !), our Beppo has again returned to the maternal uncle at Palermo. The uncle naturally asked him, What he next meant to do ? Beppo, after stammering and hesitating for some length of weeks, makes answer : Try Painting. Well and good ! So Beppo gets him colours, brushes, fit tackle, and addicts himself for some space of time to the study of what is innocently called *Design*. Alas, if we consider Beppo's great Hunger now that new senses were unfolding in him, how inadequate are the exiguous resources of Design ; how necessary to attempt quite another deeper species of Design, of Designs ! It is true, he lives with his uncle, has culinary meat ; but where is the pocket-money for other costlier sorts of meats to come from ? As the Kaiser Joseph was wont to say : From my head alone (*De ma tête seule*) !

The Roman Biographer, though a most wooden man, has incidentally thrown some light on Beppo's position at this juncture : both on his wants and his resources. As to the first, it appears (using the wooden man's phraseology) that he kept the " worst company," led the " loosest life ; " was hand-in-glove with all the swindlers, gamblers, idle apprentices, unfortunate-females, of Palermo : in the study and practice of Scoundrelism diligent beyond most. The genius which has burst asunder convent-walls, and other rubbish of impediments, now flames upward towards its mature splendour. Wheresoever a stroke of mischief is to be done, a slush of so-called vicious enjoyment to be swallowed, there with hand and throat is Beppo Balsamo seen. He will be a Master, one day, in his profession. Not indeed that he has yet quitted Painting, or even purposes so much : for the present, it is useful, indispensable, as a stalking-horse to the maternal uncle and neighbours ; nay to himself,—for with all the ebullient impulses of scoundrel-genius restlessly seething in him, irrepressibly bursting through, he has the noble unconsciousness of genius ; guesses not, dare not guess, that he is a born scoundrel, much less a born world-scoundrel.

But as for the other question, of his resources, these we perceive were several-fold, and continually extending. Not to mention any pictorial exiguities, which indeed existed chiefly in expectance,—there had almost accidentally arisen for him, in the first place, the resource of Pandering. He

has a fair cousin living in the house with him, and she again has a lover; Beppo stations himself as go-between; delivers letters; fails not to drop hints that a lady, to be won or kept, must be generously treated; that such and such a pair of earrings, watch, necklace, or even sum of money, would work wonders; which valuables, adds the wooden Roman Biographer, "he then appropriated furtively." Like enough! Next, however, as another more lasting resource, he forges; at first in a small way, and trying his apprentice-hand: tickets for the theatre, and such trifles. Erelong, however, we see him fly at higher quarry; by practice he has acquired perfection in the great art of counterfeiting hands; and will exercise it on the large or on the narrow scale, for a consideration. Among his relatives is a Notary, with whom he can insinuate himself; for purpose of study, or even of practice. In the presses of this Notary lies a Will, which Beppo contrives to come at, and falsify "for the benefit of a certain Religious House." Much good may it do them! Many years afterwards the fraud was detected; but Beppo's benefit in it was spent and safe long before. Thus again the stolid Biographer expresses horror or wonder that he should have forged leave-of-absence for a monk, "counterfeiting the signature of the Superior." Why not? A forger must forge what is wanted of him: the Lion truly preys not on mice; yet shall he refuse such, if they jump into his mouth? Enough, the indefatigable Beppo has here opened a quite boundless mine; wherein through his whole life he will, as occasion calls, dig, at his convenience. Finally, he can predict fortunes, and show visions,—by phosphorus and legerdemain. This, however, only as a dilettantism; to take-up the earnest profession of Magician does not yet enter into his views. Thus perfecting himself in all branches of his art, does our Balsamo live and grow. Stupid, pudding-faced as he looks and is, there is a vulpine astucity in him; and then a wholeness, a heartiness, a kind of blubbery impetuosity, an oiliness so plausible-looking: give him only length of life, he will rise to the top of his profession.

Consistent enough with such blubbery impetuosity in Beppo is another fact we find recorded of him, that at this time he was found "in most brawls," whether in street or tavern. The way of his business led him into liability to such; neither as yet had he learned prudence by age. Of

choleric temper, with all his obesity; a square-built, burly, vociferous fellow; ever ready with his stroke (if victory seemed sure); nay, at bottom, not without a certain pig-like defensive-ferocity, perhaps even something more. Thus, when you find him making a point to attack, if possible, "*all* officers of justice," and deforce them; delivering the wretched from their talons: was not this, we say, a kind of dog-faithfulness, and public spirit, either of the mastiff or of the cur species? Perhaps too there was a touch of that old Humour and "world-irony" in it. One still more unquestionable feat he is recorded (we fear, on imperfect evidence) to have done: "assassinated a canon."

Remonstrances from growling maternal uncles could not fail; threats, disdains from ill-affected neighbours; tears from an expostulating widowed mother: these he shakes from him like dewdrops from the lion's mane. Still less could the Police neglect him; him the visibly rising Professor of Swindlery; the swashbuckler, to boot, and deforcer of bailiffs: he has often been captured, haled to their bar; yet hitherto, by defect of evidence, by good luck, intercession of friends, been dismissed with admonition. Two things, nevertheless, might now be growing clear: first, that the die was cast with Beppo, and he a scoundrel for life; second, that such a mixed, composite, crypto-scoundrel life could not endure, but must unfold itself into a pure, declared one. The Tree that is planted stands not still; *must* pass through all its stages and phases, from the state of acorn to that of green leafy oak, of withered leafless oak; to the state of felled timber, finally to that of firewood and ashes. Not less (though less visibly to dull eyes) the Act that is done, the condition that has realized itself; above all things, the Man, with his Fortunes, that has been born. Beppo, everyway in vigorous vitality, cannot continue half-painting half-swindling in Palermo; must develop himself into whole swindler; and, unless hanged there, seek his bread elsewhere. What the proximate cause, or signal, of such crisis and development might be, no man could say; yet most men would have confidently guessed, The Police. Nevertheless it proved otherwise; not by the flaming sword of Justice, but by the rusty dirk of a foolish private individual, is Beppo driven forth.

Walking one day in the fields (as the bold historic Imagi-

nation will figure) with a certain ninny of a "Goldsmith named Marano," as they pass one of those rock-chasms frequent in the fair Island of Sicily, Beppo begins, in his oily, voluble way, to hint, That treasures often lay hid; that a Treasure lay hid *there*, as he knew by some pricking of his thumbs, divining-rod, or other talismanic monition: which Treasure might, by aid of science, courage, secrecy and a small judicious advance of money, be fortunately lifted. The gudgeon takes; advances, by degrees, to the length of "sixty gold Ounces;" * sees magic circles drawn in the wane or in the full of the moon, blue (phosphorus) flames arise, split twigs auspiciously quiver; and at length—demands peremptorily that the Treasure be dug. A night is fixed on: the ninny Goldsmith, trembling with rapture and terror, breaks ground; digs, with thick breath and cold sweat, fiercely down, down, Beppo relieving him: the work advances; when, ah! at a certain stage of it (*before* fruition) hideous yells arise, a jingle like the emptying of Birmingham; six Devils pounce upon the poor sheep Goldsmith, and beat him almost to *mutton*; mercifully sparing Balsamo,—who indeed has himself summoned them thither, and as it were created them (with goatskins and burnt cork). Marano, though a ninny, now knew how it lay; and furthermore that he had a stiletto. One of the grand drawbacks of swindler-genius! You accomplish the Problem; and then—the Elementary Quantities, Algebraic Symbols you worked on, will fly in your face!

Hearing of stilettos, our Algebraist begins to look around him, and view his empire of Palermo in the concrete. An empire now much exhausted; much infested, too, with sorrows of all kinds, and every day the more; nigh ruinous, in short; not worth being stabbed for. There is a world elsewhere. In any case, the young Raven has now shed his pens, and got fledged for flying. Shall he not spurn the whole from him, and soar off? Resolved, performed! Our Beppo quits Palermo; and, as it proved, on a long voyage: or, as the Inquisition-Biographer has it, "he fled from Palermo, and overran the whole Earth."

Here, then, ends the First Act of Count Alessandro Cagliostro's Life-drama. Let the curtain drop; and hang unrent, before an audience of mixed feeling, till the First of August.

* The Sicilian Ounce (*Onza*) is worth about ten shillings sterling.

FLIGHT LAST

BEFORE entering on the second Section of Count Beppo's History, the Editor will indulge in a philosophical reflection.

This Beppic Hegira, or Flight from Palermo, we have now arrived at, brings us down, in European History, to somewhere about the epoch of the Peace of Paris. Old Feudal Europe, while Beppo flies forth into the whole Earth, has just finished the last of her "tavern-brawls," or wars; and lain down to doze, and yawn, and disconsolately wear-off the headaches, bruises, nervous prostration and flaccidity consequent thereon: for the brawl had been a long one, *Seven Years* long; and there had been many such, begotten, as is usual, of intoxication from Pride or other Devil's-drink, and foul humours in the constitution. Alas, it was not so much a disconsolate doze, after ebriety and quarrel, that poor old Feudal Europe had now to undergo, and then on awakening to drink anew, and quarrel anew: old Feudal Europe has fallen a-dozing to die! Her next awakening will be with no tavern-brawl, at the *King's Head* or *Prime Minister* tavern; but with the stern Avatar of DEMOCRACY, hymning its world-thrilling birth- and battle-song in the distant West;—therefrom to go out conquering and to conquer, till it have made a circuit of all the Earth, and old dead Feudal Europe is born again (after infinite pangs!) into a new Industrial one. At Beppo's Hegira, as we said, Europe was in the last languor and stertorous fever-sleep of Dissolution: alas, with us, and with our sons for a generation or two, it is almost still worse,—were it not that in Birth-throes there is ever hope, in Death-throes the final departure of hope.

Now the philosophic reflection we were to indulge in was no other than this, most germane to our subject: the portentous extent of Quackery, the multitudinous variety of Quacks that, along with our Beppo, and under him each in his degree, overran all Europe during that same period, the latter half of last century. It was the very age of impostors, cut-purses, swindlers, double-goers, enthusiasts, ambiguous persons; quacks simple, quacks compound; crack-brained, or with deceit prepense; quacks and quackeries of all colours and kinds. How many Mesmerists, Magicians, Cabalists, Swedenborgians, Illuminati, Crucified Nuns, and Devils of Loudun! To which the Inquisition-Biographer

adds Vampires, Sylphs, Rosicrucians, Freemasons, and an *Etcetera*. Consider your Schröpfers, Cagliostros, Casanovas, Saint-Germains, Dr. Grahams; the Chevalier d'Eon, Psalmanazar, Abbé Paris and the Ghost of Cock-lane! As if Bedlam had broken loose; as if, rather, in that "spiritual Twelfth-hour of the night," the everlasting Pit had opened itself, and from *its* still blacker bosom had issued Madness and all manner of shapeless Misbirths, to masquerade and chatter there.

But indeed, if we consider, how could it be otherwise? In that stertorous last fever-sleep of our European world, must not Phantasms enough, born of the Pit, as all such *are*, flit past, in ghastly masquerading and chattering? A low scarce-audible moan (in Parliamentary Petitions, Mealmobs, Popish Riots, Treatises on Atheism) struggles from the moribund sleeper: frees him not from his hellish guests and saturnalia: Phantasms these "of a dying brain." So too, when the old Roman world, the measure of its iniquities being full, was to expire, and (in still bitterer agonies) be born again, had they not Veneficæ, Mathematici, Apolloniuses with the Golden Thigh, Apollonius' Asses, and False Christs enough,—before a REDEEMER arose!

For, in truth, and altogether apart from such half-figurative language, Putrescence is not more naturally the scene of unclean creatures in the world physical, than Social Decay is of quacks in the world moral. Nay, look at it with the eye of the mere Logician, of the Political Economist. In such periods of Social Decay, what is called an overflowing Population, that is a Population which, under the old Captains of Industry (named Higher Classes, *Ricos Hombres*, Aristocracies and the like), can no longer find work and wages, increases the number of Unprofessionals, Lackalls, Social Nondescripts; with appetite of utmost keenness, which there is no known method of satisfying. Nay more, and perversely enough, ever as Population augments, your Captains of Industry can and do dwindle more and more into Captains of Idleness; whereby the more and more overflowing Population is worse and worse governed (shown *what to do*, for that is the only government): thus is the candle lighted at both ends; and the number of social Nondescripts increases in *double*-quick ratio. Whoso is alive, it is said, "must live;" at all events, will live; a task which daily gets harder, reduces to stranger shifts.

And now furthermore, with general economic distress, in

such a Period, there is usually conjoined the utmost decay of moral principle: indeed, so universal is this conjunction, many men have seen it to be a concatenation and causation; justly enough, except that such have very generally, ever since a certain religious-repentant feeling went out of date, committed one sore mistake: what is vulgarly called putting the cart before the horse. Politico-economical benefactor of the species! deceive not thyself with barren sophisms: National suffering *is*, if thou wilt understand the words, verily a "judgment of God;" has ever been preceded by national crime. "Be it here once more maintained before the world," cries Sauerteig, in one of his *Springwurzeln*, "that temporal Distress, that Misery of any kind, is not the *cause* of Immorality, but the effect thereof! Among individuals, it is true, so wide is the empire of Chance, poverty and wealth go all at hap-hazard; a St. Paul is making tents at Corinth, while a Kaiser Nero fiddles, in ivory palaces, over a burning Rome. Nevertheless here too, if nowise wealth and poverty, yet well-being and ill-being, even in the temporal economic sense, go commonly in respective partnership with Wisdom and with Folly: no man can, for a length of time, be wholly wretched, if there is not a disharmony (a folly and wickedness) within himself; neither can the richest Crœsus and never so eupeptic (for he too has his indigestions, and dies at last of surfeit), be other than discontented, perplexed, unhappy, if he be a Fool."—This we apprehend is true, O Sauerteig, yet not the whole truth: for there is more than day's-work and day's-wages in this world of ours: which, as thou knowest, is itself quite other than a "Workshop and Fancy-Bazaar," is also a "Mystic Temple and Hall of Doom." Thus we have heard of such things as good men struggling with adversity, and offering a spectacle for the very gods.

"But with a nation," continues he, "where the multitude of the chances covers, in great measure, the uncertainty of Chance, it may be said to hold always that general Suffering is the fruit of general Misbehaviour, general Dishonesty. Consider it well; had all men stood faithfully to their posts, the Evil, when it first arose, had been manfully fronted, and abolished, not lazily blinked, and left to grow, with the foul sluggard's comfort: 'It will last my time.' Thou foul sluggard, and even thief (*Faulenzer, ja Dieb*)! For art thou not a thief, to pocket thy day's-wages (be they counted in *groschen* or in gold thousands) for this,

if it be for anything, for watching on thy special watch-tower that God's City (which this His World is, where His children dwell) suffer no damage; and, all the while, to watch only that thy own ease be not invaded,—let otherwise hard come to hard as it will and can? Unhappy! It will last thy time: thy worthless sham of an existence, wherein nothing but the Digestion was real, will have evaporated in the interim; it will last thy time: but will it last thy *Eternity*? Or what if it should *not* last thy time (mark that also, for that also will be the fate of *some* such lying sluggard), but take fire, and explode, and consume thee like the moth!"

The sum of the matter, in any case, is, that national Poverty and national Dishonesty go together; that continually increasing social Nondescripts get ever the hungrier, ever the falser. Now say, have we not here the very making of Quackery; raw-material, plastic-energy, both in full action? Dishonesty the raw-material, Hunger the plastic-energy: what will not the two realize? Nay observe farther how Dishonesty is the raw-material not of Quacks only, but also in great part of Dupes. In Goodness, were it never so simple, there is the surest instinct for the Good; the uneasiest unconquerable repulsion for the False and Bad. The very Devil Mephistopheles cannot deceive poor guileless Margaret: "it stands written on his brow that he never loved a living soul!" The like too has many a human inferior Quack painfully experienced; the like lies in store for our hero Beppo. But now with such abundant raw-material not only to make Quacks of, but to feed and occupy them on, if the plastic-energy of Hunger fail not, what a world shall we have! The wonder is not that the eighteenth century had very numerous Quacks, but rather that they were not innumerable.

In that same French Revolution alone, which burnt-up so much, what unmeasured masses of Quackism were set fire to; nay, as foul mephitic fire-damp in that case, were made to flame in a fierce, sublime *splendour*; coruscating, even illuminating! The Count Saint-Germain, some twenty years later, had found a quite new element, of Fraternization, Sacred right of Insurrection, Oratorship of the Human Species, wherefrom to body himself forth quite otherwise: Schröpfer needed not now, as Blackguard undeterred, have solemnly shot himself in the *Rosenthal*; might have solemnly sacrificed himself, as Jacobin half-heroic, in the *Place*

de la Révolution. For your quack-genius is indeed born, but also made; circumstances shape him or stunt him. Beppo Balsamo, born British in these new days, could have conjured fewer Spirits; yet had found a living and glory, as Castlereagh Spy, Irish Associationist, Blacking-Manufacturer, Book-Publisher, Able Editor. Withal too the reader will observe that Quacks, in every time, are of two sorts: the Declared Quack; and the Undeclared, who, if you question him, will deny stormfully, both to others and to himself; of which two quack-species the proportions vary with the varying capacity of the age. If Beppo's was the age of the Declared, therein, after all French Revolutions, we will grant, lay one of its main distinctions from ours; which is it not yet, and for a generation or two, the age of the Undeclared? Alas, almost a still more detestable age;—yet now (by God's grace), with Prophecy, with irreversible Enactment, registered in Heaven's chancery,—where *thou* too, if thou wilt *look*, mayst read and know, That its death-doom shall not linger. Be it speedy, be it sure!—And so herewith were our philosophical reflection, on the nature, causes, prevalence, decline and expected temporary destruction of Quackery, concluded; and now the Beppic poetic Narrative can once more take its course.

Beppo, then, like a Noah's Raven, is out upon that watery waste of dissolute, beduped, distracted European Life, to see if there is any carrion there. One unguided little Raven, in the wide-weltering "Mother of Dead Dogs:" will he not come to harm; will he not be snapt-up, drowned, starved and washed to the Devil there? No fear of him,—for a time. His eye (or scientific judgment), it is true, as yet takes-in only a small section of it; but then his scent (instinct of genius) is prodigious: several endowments, forgery and others, he has unfolded into talents; the two sources of all quack-talent, Cunning and Impudence, are his in richest measure.

As to his immediate course of action and adventure, the foolish Inquisition-Biographer, it must be owned, shows himself a fool, and can give us next to no insight. Like enough, Beppo "fled to Messina;" simply as to the nearest city, and to get across to the mainland: but as to this "certain Althotas" whom he met there, and voyaged with to Alexandria in Egypt, and how they made hemp into silk, and realized much money, and came to Malta, and studied

in the Laboratory there, and then the certain Althotas died, —of all this what shall be said ? The foolish Inquisition-Biographer is uncertain whether the certain Althotas was a Greek or a Spaniard : but unhappily the prior question is not settled, whether he *was* at all. Superfluous it seems to put down Beppo's own account of his procedure ; he gave multifarious accounts, as the exigencies of the case demanded : this of the " certain Althotas," and hemp made into false silk, is as verisimilar as that other of the " sage Althotas," the heirship-apparent of Trebisond, and the Scherif of Mecca's " Adieu, unfortunate Child of Nature." Nay the guesses of the ignorant world ; how Count Cagliostro had been travelling-tutor to a Prince (name not given), whom he murdered and took the money from ; with others of the like,—were perhaps still more absurd. Beppo, we can see, was out and away,—the Devil knew whither. Far, variegated, painful might his roamings be. A plausible-looking shadow of him shows itself hovering over Naples and Calabria ; thither, as to a famed high-school of Laziness and Scoundrelism, he may likely enough have gone to graduate. Of the Malta Laboratory, and Alexandrian hemp-silk, the less we say the better. This only is clear : That Beppo dived deep down into the lugubrious-obscure regions of Rascaldom ; like a Knight to the palace of his Fairy ; remained unseen there, and returned thence armed at all points.

If we fancy, meanwhile, that Beppo already meditated becoming Grand Cophta, and riding at Strasburg in the Cardinal's carriage, we mistake much. Gift of Prophecy has been wisely denied to man. Did a man *foresee* his life, and not merely *hope* it, and grope it, and so, by Necessity and Freewill, make and fabricate it into a reality, he were no *man*, but some other kind of creature, superhuman or subterhuman. No man sees far ; the most see no farther than their noses. From the quite dim uncertain mass of the future, " which lies there," says a Scottish Humorist, " uncombed, uncarded, like a mass of *tarry wool* proverbially *ill to spin*," they spin out, better or worse, their rumply, infirm thread of Existence, and wind it up, up,—till the spool is *full* ; seeing but some little half-yard of it at once ; exclaiming, as they look into the betarred entangled mass of Futurity, We *shall* see !

The first authentic fact with regard to Beppo is, that his swart squat figure becomes visible in the Corso and Campo

Vaccino of Rome ; that he " lodges at the Sign of the Sun in the Rotonda," and sells pen-drawings there. Properly they are not pen-drawings ; but printed engravings or etchings, to which Beppo, with a pen and a little Indian ink, has added the degree of scratching to give them the air of such. Thereby mainly does he realize a thin livelihood. From which we infer that his transactions in Naples and Calabria, with Althotas and hemp-silk, or whatever else, had not turned to much.

Forged pen-drawings are no mine of wealth : neither was Beppo Balsamo anything of an Adonis ; on the contrary, a most dusky, bull-necked, mastiff-faced, sinister-looking individual : nevertheless, on applying for the favour of the hand of Lorenza Feliciani, a beautiful Roman donzella, " dwelling near the Trinity of the Pilgrims," the unfortunate child of Nature prospers beyond our hopes. Authorities differ as to the rank and status of this fair Lorenza : one account says, she was the daughter of a Girdle-maker ; but adds erroneously that it was in Calabria. The matter must remain suspended. Certain enough, she was a handsome buxom creature ; " both pretty and ladylike," it is presumable ; but having no offer, in a country too prone to celibacy, took-up with the bull-necked forger of pen-drawings, whose suit too was doubtless pressed with the most flowing rhetoric. She gave herself in marriage to him ; and the parents admitted him to quarter in their house, till it should appear what was next to be done.

Two kitchen-fires, says the Proverb, burn not on one hearth : here, moreover, might be quite special causes of discord. Pen-drawing, at best a hungry concern, has now exhausted itself, and must be given up ; but Beppo's household prospects brighten, on the other side : in the charms of his Lorenza he sees before him what the French call " a Future confused and immense." The hint was given ; and, with reluctance, or without reluctance (for the evidence leans *both* ways), was taken and reduced to practice : Signor and Signora Balsamo are forth from the old Girdler's house, into the wide world, seeking and finding adventures.

The foolish Inquisition-Biographer, with painful scientific accuracy, furnishes a descriptive catalogue of all the successive Cullies (Italian Counts, French Envoys, Spanish Marquises, Dukes and Drakes) in various quarters of the known world, whom this accomplished pair took-in ; with the sums each yielded, and the methods employed to be-

witch him. Into which descriptive catalogue, why should we here so much as cast a glance? Cullies, the easy cushions on which knaves and knavesses repose and fatten, have at all times existed, in considerable profusion: neither can the fact of a clothed animal, Marquis or other, having acted in that capacity to never such lengths, entitle him to mention in History. We pass over these. Beppo, or as we must now learn to call him, the Count, appears at Venice, at Marseilles, at Madrid, Cadiz, Lisbon, Brussels; makes scientific pilgrimage to Quack Saint-Germain in Westphalia, religious-commercial to Saint Saint-James in Compostella, to Our Lady in Loretto: south, north, east, west, he shows himself; finds everywhere Lubricity and Stupidity (better or worse provided with cash), the two elements on which he thaumaturgically can work and live. Practice makes perfection; Beppo too was an apt scholar. By all methods he can awaken the stagnant imagination; cast maddening powder in the eyes.

Already in Rome he has cultivated whiskers, and put-on the uniform of a Prussian Colonel: dame Lorenza is fair to look upon; but how much fairer, if by the air of distance and dignity you lend enchantment to her! In other places, the Count appears as real Count; as Marquis Pellegrini (lately from foreign parts); as Count this and Count that, Count Proteus-Incognito; finally as Count Alessandro Cagliostro.* Figure him shooting through the world with utmost rapidity; ducking-under here, when the sword-fishes of Justice make a dart at him; ducking-up yonder in new shape, at the distance of a thousand miles; not unprovided with forged vouchers of respectability; above all, with that best voucher of respectability, a four-horse carriage, beef-eaters, and open purse, for Count Cagliostro has ready-money and pays his way. At some Hotel of the Sun, Hotel of the Angel, Gold Lion, or Green Goose, or whatever Hotel it is, in whatever world-famous capital City, his chariot-wheels have rested; sleep and food have refreshed his live-stock, chiefly the pearl and soul thereof, his indispensable Lorenza, now no longer Dame Lorenza, but Countess Seraphina, looking seraphic enough! Moneyed Donothings, whereof in this vexed Earth there are many, ever lounging about such places, scan

* Not altogether an *invention* this last; for his granduncle (a bell-founder at Messina?) was actually surnamed *Cagliostro,* as well as named *Giuseppe.*—O. Y.

and comment on the foreign coat-of-arms ; ogle the fair foreign woman ; who timidly recoils from their gaze, timidly responds to their reverences, as in halls and passages, they obsequiously throw themselves in her way : erelong one moneyed Donothing, from amid his tags and tassels, sword-belts, fop-tackle, frizzled hair without brains beneath it, is heard speaking to another : " Seen the Countess ?—Divine creature that ! "—and so the game is begun.

Let not the too sanguine reader, meanwhile, fancy that it is all holiday and heyday with his Lordship. The course of scoundrelism, any more than that of true love, never did run smooth. Seasons there may be when Count Proteus-Incognito has his epaulettes torn from his shoulders ; his garment-skirts clipt close by the buttocks ; and is bid sternly tarry at Jericho till his beard be grown. Harpies of Law defile his solemn feasts ; his light burns languid ; for a space seems utterly snuffed out, and dead in malodorous vapour. Dead only to blaze up the brighter ! There is a scoundrel-life in Beppo Cagliostro ; cast him among the mud, tread him out of sight there, the miasmata do but stimulate and refresh him, he rises sneezing, is strong and young again.

Behold him, for example, again in Palermo, after having seen many men and many lands ; and how he again escapes thence. Why did he return to Palermo ? Perhaps to astonish old friends by new grandeur ; or for temporary shelter, if the Continent were getting hot for him ; or perhaps in the mere way of general trade. He is seized there, and clapt in prison, for those foolish old businesses of the treasure-digging Goldsmith, of the forged Will.

" The manner of his escape," says one, whose few words on this obscure matter are so many light-points for us, " deserves to be described. The Son of one of the first Sicilian Princes, and great landed Proprietors (who moreover had filled important stations at the Neapolitan Court), was a person that united with a strong body and ungovernable temper all the tyrannical caprice, which the rich and great, with cultivation, think themselves entitled to exhibit.

" Donna Lorenza had contrived to gain this man ; and on him the fictitious Marchese Pellegrini founded his security. The Prince testified openly that he was the protector of this stranger pair : but what was his fury when Joseph Balsamo, at the instance of those whom he had cheated, was cast into prison ! He tried various means to deliver him ; and as these would not prosper, he publicly, in the Presi-

dent's ante-chamber, threatened the plaintiffs' Advocate with the frightfulest misusage if the suit were not dropt, and Balsamo forthwith set at liberty. As the Advocate declined such proposal, he clutched him, beat him, threw him on the floor, trampled him with his feet, and could hardly be restrained from still farther outrages, when the President himself came running out at the tumult, and commanded peace.

"This latter, a weak, dependent man, made no attempt to punish the injurer; the plaintiffs and their Advocate grew fainthearted; and Balsamo was let go; not so much as a registration in the Court-Books specifying his dismissal, who occasioned it, or how it took place." *

Thus sometimes, a friend in the court is better than a penny in the purse! Marchese Pellegrini "quickly thereafter left Palermo, and performed various travels, whereof my author could impart no clear information." Whether, or how far, the Game-chicken Prince went with him is not hinted.

So it might, at times, be quite otherwise than in coach-and-four that our Cagliostro journeyed. Occasionally we find him as outrider journeying on horseback; only Seraphina and her sop (whom she is to suck and eat) lolling on carriage-cushions; the hardy Count glad that hereby he can have the shot paid. Nay sometimes he looks utterly poverty-struck, and has to journey one knows not how. Thus one briefest but authentic-looking glimpse of him presents itself in England, in the year 1772: no Count is he here, but mere Signor Balsamo again; engaged in house-painting, for which he has a most peculiar talent. Was it true that he painted the country-house of "a Doctor Benemore:" and having not painted, but only smeared it, was refused payment, and got a lawsuit with expenses instead? If Doctor Benemore have left any representatives in this Earth, they are desired to speak out. We add only, that if young Beppo had one of the prettiest wives, old Benemore had one of the ugliest daughters; and so, putting one thing to another, matters might not be so bad.

For it is to be observed, that the Count, on his own side, even in his days of highest splendour, is not idle. Faded dames of quality have many wants: the Count has not studied in the convent Laboratory, or pilgrimed to the Count Saint-Germain, in Westphalia, to no purpose. With loftiest

* Goethe's *Werke*, b. xxviii. 132.

condescension he stoops to impart somewhat of his supernatural secrets,—for a consideration. Rowland's Kalydor is valuable; but what to the Beautifying-water of Count Alessandro! He that will undertake to smooth wrinkles, and make withered green parchment into a fair carnation skin, is he not one whom faded dames of quality will delight to honour? Or again, let the Beautifying-water succeed or not, have not such dames, if calumny may be in aught believed, *another* want? This want, too, the indefatigable Cagliostro will supply,—for a consideration. For faded gentlemen of quality the Count likewise has help. Not a charming Countess alone; but a "Wine of Egypt" (cantharides not being unknown to him), sold in drops, more precious than nectar; which what faded gentleman of quality would not purchase with anything short of life? Consider now what may be done with potions, washes, charms, love-philtres, among a class of mortals, idle from the mother's womb; rejoicing to be taught the Ionic dances, and meditating of love from their tender nails!

Thus waxing, waning, broad-shining, or extinct, an inconstant but unwearied Moon, rides on its course the Cagliostric star. Thus are Count and Countess busy in their vocation; thus do they spend the golden season of their youth,—shall we say, "for the Greatest Happiness of the greatest number"? Happy enough, had there been no sumptuary or adultery or swindlery Law-acts; no Heaven above, no Hell beneath; no flight of Time, and gloomy land of Eld and Destitution and Desperation, towards which, by law of Fate, they see themselves, at all moments, with frightful regularity, unaidably drifting.

The prudent man provides against the inevitable. Already Count Cagliostro, with his love-philtres, his cantharidic Wine of Egypt; nay far earlier, by his blue-flames and divining-rods, as with the poor sheep Goldsmith of Palermo; and ever since, by many a significant hint thrown out where the scene suited,—has dabbled in the Supernatural. As his seraphic Countess gives signs of withering, and one luxuriant branch of industry will die and drop off, others must be pushed into budding. Whether it was in England during what he called his "first visit" in the year 1776 (for the before-first, house-smearing visit was, reason or none, to go for nothing) that he first thought of Prophecy as a trade, is unknown: certain enough, he had begun to practise it then; and this indeed not without a glimpse of insight into

the English national character. Various, truly, are the pursuits of mankind ; whereon they would fain, unfolding the future, take Destiny by surprise : with us, however, as a nation of shopkeepers, they may be all said to centre in this one, *Put money in thy purse* ! O for a Fortunatus'-Pocket, with its ever-new coined gold ;—if, indeed, the true prayer were not rather : O for a Crassus'-Drink, of *liquid* gold, that so the accursed throat of Avarice might for once have enough and to spare ! Meanwhile whoso should engage, keeping clear of the gallows, to teach men the secret of making money, were not he a Professor sure of audience ? Strong were the general Scepticism ; still stronger the general Need and Greed. Count Cagliostro, from his residence in Whitcombe Street, it is clear, had looked into the mysteries of the Little-go ; by occult science knew the lucky number. Bish as yet was not ; but Lotteries were ; gulls also were. The Count has his Language-master, his Portuguese Jew, his nondescript Ex-Jesuits, whom he puts forth as antennæ, into coffee-houses, to stir-up the minds of men. "Lord" Scott (a swindler swindled), and Miss Fry, and many others, were they here, could tell what it cost them : nay, the very Law-books, and Lord Mansfield and Mr. Howarth speak of hundreds, and jewel-boxes, and quite handsome booties. Thus can the bustard pluck geese, and, if Law do get the carcass, live upon their giblets ;—now and then, however, finds a vulture, too tough to pluck.

The attentive reader is no doubt curious to understand all the What and the How of Cagliostro's procedure while England was the scene. As we too are, and have been ; but unhappily all in vain. To that English *Life* of uncertain gender none, as was said, need in their utmost extremity repair. Scarcely the very lodging of Cagliostro can be ascertained ; except incidentally that it was once in Whitcombe Street ; for a few days, in Warwick Court, Holborn ; finally, for some space, in the King's Bench Jail. Vain were it, meanwhile, for any reverencer of genius to pilgrim thither, seeking memorials of a great man. Cagliostro is clean gone : on the strictest search, no token never so faint discloses itself. He went, and left nothing behind him ;—except perhaps a few cast-clothes, and other inevitable exuviæ, long since, not indeed annihilated (this nothing can be), yet beaten into mud, and spread as new soil over the general surface of Middlesex and Surrey ; floated by the Thames into old Ocean ; or flitting, the gaseous parts of

them, in the universal Atmosphere, borne thereby to remotest corners of the Earth, or beyond the limits of the Solar System! So fleeting is the track and habitation of man; so wondrous the stuff he builds of; his house, his very house of houses (what we call his *body*), were he the first of geniuses, will evaporate in the strangest manner, and vanish even whither we have said.

To us on our side, however, it is cheering to discover, for one thing, that Cagliostro found antagonists worthy of him: the bastard plucking geese, and living on their giblets, found not our whole Island peopled with geese, but here and there, as above hinted, with vultures, with hawks of still sharper quality than his. Priddle, Aylett, Saunders, O'Reilly: let these stand forth as the vindicators of English national character. By whom Count Alessandro Cagliostro, as in dim fluctuating outline indubitably appears, was bewritted, arrested, fleeced, hatchelled, bewildered and bedevilled, till the very Jail of King's Bench seemed a refuge from them. A wholly obscure contest, as was natural; wherein, however, to all candid eyes the vulturous and falconish character of our Isle fully asserts itself; and the foreign Quack of Quacks, with all his thaumaturgic Hemp-silks, Lottery-numbers, Beauty-waters, Seductions, Phosphorus-boxes, and Wines of Egypt, is seen matched, and nigh throttled, by the natural unassisted cunning of English Attorneys. Whereupon the bastard, feeling himself so pecked and plucked, takes wing, and flies to foreign parts.

One good thing he has carried with him, notwithstanding: initiation into some primary arcana of Freemasonry. The Quack of Quacks, with his primitive bias towards the supernatural-mystificatory, must long have had his eye on Masonry; which, with its blazonry and mummery, sashes, drawn sabres, brothers Terrible, brothers Venerable (the whole so imposing by candle-light), offered the choicest element for him. All men profit by *Union* with men; the quack as much as another; nay in these two words, *Sworn Secrecy*, alone has he not found a very talisman! Cagliostro, then, determines on Masonship. It was afterwards urged that the Lodge to which he and his Seraphina got admission, for she also was made a Mason, or Masoness, and had a riband-garter solemnly bound on, with order to sleep in it for a night,—was a Lodge of low rank in the social scale; numbering not a few of the pastrycook and hairdresser species. To which it could only be replied, that

these alone spoke French ; that a man and mason, though he cooked pastry, was still a man and mason. Be this as it might, the apt Recipiendary is rapidly promoted through the three grades of Apprentice, Companion, Master ; at the cost of five guineas. That of his being first raised into the air, by means of a rope and pulley fixed in the ceiling, " during which the heavy mass of his body must assuredly have caused him a dolorous sensation ; " and then being forced blindfold to shoot himself (though with privily *dis*-loaded pistol), in sign of courage and obedience : all this we can esteem an apocrypha,—palmed on the Roman Inquisition, otherwise prone to delusion. Five guineas, and some foolish froth-speeches, delivered over liquor and otherwise, was the cost. If you ask now, In *what* London Lodge was it ? Alas, we know not, and shall never know. Certain only that Count Alessandro *is* a master-mason ; that having once crossed the threshold, his plastic genius will not stop there. Behold, accordingly, he has bought from a " Book-seller " certain manuscripts belonging to " one George Cofton, a man absolutely unknown to him " and to us, which treat of the " Egyptian Masonry " ! In other words, Count Alessandro will *blow* with his new five-guinea bellows ; having always occasion to raise the wind.

With regard specially to that huge soap-bubble of an Egyptian Masonry which he blew, and as conjuror caught many flies with, it is our painful duty to say a little ; not much. The Inquisition-Biographer, with deadly fear of heretical and democratical and black-magical Freemasons before his eyes, has gone into the matter to boundless depths ; commenting, elucidating, even confuting : a certain expository masonic Order-Book of Cagliostro's which he has laid hand on, opens the whole mystery to him. The ideas he declares to be Cagliostro's ; the composition all a disciple's, for the Count had no gift that way. What, then, does the disciple set forth,—or, at lowest, the Inquisition-Biographer say that he sets forth ? Much, much that is not to the point.

Understand, however, that once inspired, by the absolutely unknown George Cofton, with the notion of Egyptian Masonry, wherein as yet lay much " magic and superstition," Count Alessandro resolves to free it of these impious ingredients, and make it a kind of Last Evangel, or Renovator of the Universe,—which so needed renovation. " As he did not believe anything in matter of Faith," says our

wooden Familiar, "nothing could arrest him." True enough: how did he move along, then; to what length did he go?

"In his system he promises his followers to conduct them to *perfection*, by means of a *physical and moral regeneration*; to enable them by the former (or physical) to find the *prime matter*, or Philosopher's Stone, and the *acacia* which consolidates in man the forces of the most vigorous youth, and renders him immortal; and by the latter (or moral) to procure them a Pentagon, which shall restore man to his primitive state of innocence, lost by original sin. The Founder supposes that this Egyptian Masonry was instituted by Enoch and Elias, who propagated it in different parts of the world; however in time it lost much of its purity and splendour. And so, by degrees, the Masonry of men had been reduced to pure buffoonery; and that of women being almost entirely destroyed, having now for most part no place in common Masonry. Till at last, the zeal of the *Grand Cophta* (so are the High-priests of Egypt named) had signalized itself by restoring the Masonry of both sexes to its pristine lustre."

With regard to the great question of constructing this invaluable Pentagon, which is to abolish Original Sin: how you have to choose a solitary mountain, and call it Sinai; and build a Pavilion on it to be named Sion, with twelve sides, in every side a window, and three stories, one of which is named Ararat; and there, with Twelve Masters, each at a window, yourself in the middle of them, to go through unspeakable formalities, vigils, removals, fasts, toils, distresses, and hardly get your Pentagon after all,—with regard to this great question and construction, we shall say nothing. As little concerning the still grander and painfuller process of Physical Regeneration, or growing young again; a thing not to be accomplished without a forty-days' course of medicine, purgations, sweating-baths, fainting-fits, root-diet, phlebotomy, starvation and desperation, more perhaps than it is all worth. Leaving these interior solemnities, and many high moral precepts of union, virtue, wisdom, and doctrines of immortality and what not, will the reader care to cast an indifferent glance on certain esoteric ceremonial parts of this Egyptian Masonry,—as the Inquisition-Biographer, if we miscellaneously cull from him, may enable us?

"In all these ceremonial parts," huskily avers the wooden

Biographer, " you find as much sacrilege, profanation, superstition and idolatry, as in common Masonry : invocations of the holy Name, prosternations, adorations lavished on the Venerable, or head of the Lodge ; aspirations, insufflations, incense-burnings, fumigations, exorcisms of the Candidates and the garments they are to take ; emblems of the sacrosanct Triad, of the Moon, of the Sun, of the Compass, Square, and a thousand-thousand other iniquities and ineptitudes, which are now well known in the world."

" We above made mention of the Grand Cophta. By this title has been designated the founder or restorer of Egyptian Masonry. Cagliostro made no difficulty in admitting " (to me the Inquisitor) " that under such name he was himself meant : now in this system the Grand Cophta is compared to the Highest : the most solemn acts of worship are paid him ; he has authority over the Angels ; he is invoked on all occasions ; everything is done in virtue of his power ; which you are assured he derives immediately from God. Nay more : among the various rites observed in this exercise of Masonry, you are ordered to recite the *Veni Creator spiritus*, the *Te Deum*, and some Psalms of David : to such an excess is impudence and audacity carried, that in the Psalm, *Memento, Domine, David et omnis mansuetudinis ejus*, every time the name David occurs, that of the Grand Cophta is to be substituted.

" No religion is excluded from the Egyptian Society : the Jew, the Calvinist, the Lutheran, can be admitted equally well with the Catholic, if so be they admit the existence of God and the immortality of the soul." " The men elevated to the rank of master take the names of the ancient Prophets ; the women those of the Sibyls."

. . . " Then the grand Mistress blows on the face of the female Recipiendary, all along from brow to chin, and says : ' I give you this breath, to cause to germinate and become alive in your heart the Truth which we possess ; to fortify in you the ' etc. etc. ' Guardian of the new Knowledge which we prepare to make you partake of, by the sacred names of *Helios, Mene, Tetragrammaton.*'

" In the *Essai sur les Illuminés*, printed at Paris in 1789, I read that these latter words were suggested to Cagliostro as Arabic or Sacred ones by a Sleight-of-hand Man, who said that he was assisted by a spirit, and added that this spirit was the Soul of a Cabalist Jew, who by art-magic had killed his pig before the Christian Advent."

. . . " They take a young lad, or a girl who is in the state of innocence, such they call the *Pupil* or the *Columb* ; the Venerable communicates to him the power he would have had before the Fall of Man ; which power consists mainly in commanding the pure Spirits ; these Spirits are to the number of seven : it is said they surround the throne ; and that they govern the seven planets : their names are Anael, Michael, Raphael, Gabriel, Uriel, Zobiachel, Anachiel."

Or would the reader wish to see this *Columb* in action ? She can act in two ways ; either behind a curtain, behind a hieroglyphically-painted Screen with " table and three candles ; " or as here " before the Caraffe," and showing face. If the miracle fail, it can only be because she is not ' in the state of innocence,"—an accident much to be guarded against. This scene is at Mittau in Courland ;—we find, indeed, that it is a *Pupil* affair, not a *Columb* one ; but for the rest, that is perfectly indifferent :

" Cagliostro accordingly (it is his own story still) brought a little Boy into the Lodge ; son of a nobleman there. He placed him on his knees before a table, whereon stood a Bottle of pure water, and behind this some lighted candles : he made an exorcism round the Boy, put his hand on his head : and both, in this attitude, addressed their prayers to God for the happy accomplishment of the work. Having then bid the child look into the Bottle, directly the child cried that he saw a garden. Knowing hereby that Heaven assisted him, Cagliostro took courage, and bade the child ask of God the grace to see the Angel Michael. At first the child said : ' I see something white ; I know not what it is.' Then he began jumping, stamping like a possessed creature, and cried : ' There now ! I see a child, like myself, that seems to have something angelical.' All the assembly, and Cagliostro himself, remained speechless with emotion. . . . The child being anew exorcized, with the hands of the Venerable on his head, and the customary prayers addressed to Heaven, he looked into the Bottle, and said, he saw his Sister at that moment coming down stairs, and embracing one of her brothers. That appeared impossible, the brother in question being then hundreds of miles off : however, Cagliostro felt not disconcerted ; said they might send to the country-house where the sister was, and see." *

* *Vie de Joseph Balsamo, traduite d'après l'original Italien*, ch. ii. iii. (Paris, 1791.)

Wonderful enough. Here, however, a fact rather suddenly transpires, which, as the Inquisition-Biographer well urges, must serve to undeceive all believers in Cagliostro; at least, call a blush into their cheeks. It seems: "The Grand Cophta, the restorer, the propagator of Egyptian Masonry, Count Cagliostro himself, testifies, in most part of his System, the profoundest respect for the Patriarch Moses: *and yet* this same Cagliostro affirmed before his judges that he had always felt the insurmountablest antipathy to Moses; and attributes this hatred to his constant opinion, that Moses was a thief for having carried-off the Egyptian vessels; which opinion, in spite of all the luminous arguments that were opposed to him to show how erroneous it was, he has continued to hold with an invincible obstinacy!" How reconcile these two inconsistencies? Ay, how?

But to finish-off this Egyptian Masonic business, and bring it all to a focus, we shall now, for the first and for the last time, peep one moment through the spyglass of Monsieur de Luchet, in that *Essai sur les Illuminés* of his. The whole matter being so much of a chimera, how can it be painted otherwise than chimerically? Of the following passage one thing is true, that a creature of the seed of Adam believed it to be true. List, list, then; O list!

"The Recipiendary is led by a darksome path, into an immense hall, the ceiling, the walls, the floor of which are covered by a black cloth, sprinkled over with red flames and menacing serpents: three sepulchral lamps emit, from time to time, a dying glimmer; and the eye half distinguishes, in this lugubrious den, certain wrecks of mortality suspended by funereal crapes: a heap of skeletons forms in the centre a sort of altar; on both sides of it are piled books; some contain menaces against the perjured; others the deadly narrative of the vengeances which the Invisible Spirit has exacted; of the infernal evocations for a long time pronounced in vain.

"Eight hours elapse. Then Phantoms, trailing mortuary veils, slowly cross the hall, and sink in caverns, without audible noise of trap-doors or of falling. You notice only that they are gone, by a fetid odour exhaled from them.

"The novice remains four-and-twenty hours in this gloomy abode, in the midst of a freezing silence. A rigorous fast has already weakened his thinking faculties. Liquors, prepared for the purpose, first weary, and at length

wear-out his senses. At his feet are placed three cups, filled with a drink of greenish colour. Necessity lifts them towards his lips ; involuntary fear repels them.

" At last appear two men ; looked upon as the ministers of death. These gird the pale brow of the Recipiendary with an auroral-coloured riband, dipt in blood, and full of silvered characters mixed with the figure of Our Lady of Loretto. He receives a copper crucifix, of two inches length ; to his neck are hung a sort of amulets, wrapped in violet cloth. He is stript of his clothes ; which two ministering brethren deposit on a funeral pile, erected at the other end of the hall. With blood, on his naked body, are traced crosses. In this state of suffering and humiliation, he sees approaching with large strides five Phantoms, armed with swords, and clad in garments dropping blood. Their faces are veiled : they spread a carpet on the floor ; kneel there ; pray ; and remain with outstretched hands crossed on their breast, and face fixed on the ground, in deep silence. An hour passes in this painful attitude. After which fatiguing trial, plaintive cries are heard ; the funeral pile takes fire, yet casts only a pale light ; the garments are thrown on it and burnt. A colossal and almost transparent Figure rises from the very bosom of the pile. At sight of it, the five prostrated men fall into convulsions insupportable to look on ; the too faithful image of those foaming struggles wherein a mortal, at handgrips with a sudden pain, ends by sinking under it.

" Then a trembling voice pierces the vault, and articulates the formula of those execrable oaths that are to be sworn : my pen falters ; I think myself almost guilty to retrace them."

O Luchet, what a taking ! Is there no hope left, thinkest thou ? Thy brain is all gone to addled albumen ; help seems none, if not in that last mother's-bosom of all the ruined : Brandy-and-water !—An unfeeling world may laugh ; but ought to recollect that, forty years ago, these things were sad realities,—in the heads of many men.

As to the execrable oaths, this seems the main one : " Honour and respect *Aqua Toffana,* as a sure, prompt and necessary means of purging the Globe, by the death or the hebetation of such as endeavour to debase the Truth, or snatch it from our hands." And so the catastrophe ends by bathing our poor half-dead Recipiendary first in blood, then, after some genuflexions, in water ; and

"serving him a repast composed of roots,"—we grieve to say, mere potatoes-and-point!

Figure now all this boundless cunningly devised Agglomerate of royal-arches, death's-heads, hieroglyphically painted screens, *Columbs* in the state of innocence; with spacious masonic halls, dark, or in the favourablest theatrical light-and-dark; Kircher's magic-lantern, Belshazzar handwritings, of phosphorus: "plaintive tones," gong-beatings; hoary beard of a supernatural Grand Cophta emerging from the gloom;—and how it acts, not only indirectly through the foolish senses of men, but directly on their Imagination; connecting itself with Enoch and Elias, with Philanthropy, Immortality, Eleutheromania, and Adam Weisshaupt's Illuminati, and so downwards to the infinite Deep: figure all this; and in the centre of it, sitting eager and alert, the skilfulest Panourgos, working the mighty chaos, into a creation—of ready-money. In such a wide plastic ocean of sham and foam had the Archquack now happily begun to envelop himself.

Accordingly he goes forth prospering and to prosper. Arrived in any City, he has but by masonic grip to accredit himself with the Venerable of the place; and, not by degrees as formerly, but in a single night, is introduced in Grand Lodge to all that is fattest and foolishest far or near; and in the fittest arena, a gilt-pasteboard Masonic hall. There between the two pillars of Jachin and Boaz, can the great Sheepstealer see his whole flock of Dupeables assembled in one penfold; affectionately blatant, licking the hand they are to bleed by. Victorious Acharat-Beppo! The genius of Amazement, moreover, has now shed her glory round him; he is radiant-headed, a supernatural by his very gait. Behold him everywhere welcomed with vivats, or in awestruck silence: gilt-pasteboard Freemasons receive him under the Steel-Arch of crossed sabres; he mounts to the Seat of the Venerable; holds high discourse hours long, on Masonry, Morality, Universal Science, Divinity, and Things in general, with "a sublimity, an emphasis and unction," proceeding, it appears, "from the special inspiration of the Holy Ghost." Then there are Egyptian Lodges to be founded, corresponded with,—a thing involving expense; elementary fractions of many a priceless arcanum, nay if the place will stand it, of the Pentagon itself, can be given to the purified in life: how

gladly would he *give* them, but they have to be brought from the uttermost ends of the world, and cost money. Now too, with what tenfold impetuosity do all the old trades of Egyptian Drops, Beauty-waters, Secret-favours, expand themselves, and rise in price ! Life-weary moneyed Do-nothing, this seraphic Countess is Grand Priestess of the Egyptian Female Lodges ; has a touch of the supra-mundane Undine in her : among all thy intrigues, hadst thou ever yet Endymion-like an intrigue with the lunar Diana,—called also Hecate ? And thou, O antique, much-loving faded Dowager, *this* Squire-of-dames can, it appears probable, command the Seven Angels, Uriel, Anachiel and Company ; at lowest, has the eyes of all Europe fixed on him !—The dog pockets money enough, and can seem to despise money.

To us, much meditating on the matter, it seemed perhaps strangest of all, how Count Cagliostro, received under the Steel Arch, could hold Discourses, of from one to three hours long, on Universal Science, of such unction, we do not say as to seem inspired by the Holy Spirit, but as not to get him lugged out of doors directly after his first head of method, and drowned in whole oceans of salt-and-water. The man could not speak : only babble in long-winded diffusions, chaotic circumvolutions tending no-whither. He had no thought for speaking with ; he had not even a language. His Sicilian Italian, and Laquais-de-place French, garnished with shreds from all European dialects, was wholly intelligible to no mortal ; a Tower-of-Babel jargon, which made many think him a kind of Jew. But indeed, with the language of Greeks, or of Angels, what better were it ? The man, once for all, has no articulate utterance ; that tongue of his emits noises enough, but no speech. Let him begin the plainest story, his stream stagnates at the first stage ; chafes, "ahem ! ahem !" loses itself in the earth ; or, bursting over, flies abroad without bank or channel,—into separate plashes. Not a stream, but a lake, a wide-spread indefinite marsh. His whole thought is confused, inextricable ; what thought, what resemblance of thought he has, cannot deliver itself, except in gasps, blustering gushes, spasmodic refluences, which make bad worse. Bubble, bubble, toil and trouble : how thou bubblest, foolish "Bubblyjock" ! Hear him once, and on a dead-lift occasion, as the Inquisition Gurney reports it :

" ' I mean and I wish to mean, that even as those who honour their father and mother, and respect the sovereign Pontiff, are blessed of God ; even so all that I did, I did it by the order of God, with the power which he vouchsafed to me, and to the advantage of God and of Holy Church ; and I mean to give the proofs of all that I have done and said, not only physically but morally, by showing that as I have served God for God and by the power of God, he has given me at last the counterpoison to confound and combat Hell ; for I know no other enemies than those that are in Hell, and if I am wrong, the Holy Father will punish me ; if I am right, he will reward me ; and if the Holy Father could get into his hands to-night these answers of mine, I predict to all brethren, believers and unbelievers, that I should be at liberty to-morrow morning.' Being desired to give these proofs then, he answered : ' To prove that I have been chosen of God as an apostle to defend and propagate religion, I say that as the Holy Church has instituted pastors to demonstrate in face of the world that she is the true Catholic faith, even so, having operated with approbation and by the counsel of pastors of the Holy Church, I am, as I said, fully justified in regard to all my operations ; and these pastors have assured me that my Egyptian Order was divine, and deserved to be formed into an Order sanctioned by the Holy Father, as I said in another interrogatory.' "

How then, in the name of wonder, said we, could such a babbling, bubbling Turkey-cock speak " with unction " ?

Two things here are to be taken into account. First, the difference between speaking and public speaking ; a difference altogether generic. Secondly, the wonderful power of a certain audacity, often named impudence. Was it never thy hard fortune, good Reader, to attend any Meeting convened for Public purposes ; any Bible-Society, Reform, Conservative, Thatched-Tavern, Hogg Dinner, or other such Meeting ? Thou hast seen some full-fed Long-ear, by free determination or on sweet constraint, start to his legs, and give voice. Well aware wert thou that there was not, had not been, could not be, in that entire ass-cranium of his any fraction of an idea : nevertheless mark him. If at first an ominous haze flit round, and nothing, not even nonsense, dwell in his recollection,—heed it not ; let him but plunge desperately on, the spell is broken. Commonplaces enough are at hand :

"labour of love," "rights of suffering millions," "throne and altar," "divine gift of song," or what else it may be; the Meeting, by its very *name*, has environed itself in a given element of Commonplace. But anon, behold how his talking-organs get heated, and the friction vanishes; cheers, applauses, with the previous dinner and strong drink, raise him to height of noblest temper. And now, as for your vociferous Dullard, is easiest of all, let him keep on the soft, safe *parallel* course; parallel to the Truth, or nearly so; for Heaven's sake, not in *contact* with it: no obstacle will meet him; on the favouring given element of Commonplace he triumphantly careers.

He is as the ass, whom you took and cast headlong into the water: the water at first threatens to swallow him; but he finds, to his astonishment, that he can *swim* therein, that it is buoyant and bears him along. One sole condition is indispensable: audacity, vulgarly called impudence. Our ass must *commit* himself to his watery "element;" in free daring, strike-forth his four limbs from him: then shall he not drown and sink, but shoot gloriously forward, and swim, to the admiration of by-standers. The ass, safe landed on the other bank, shakes his rough hide, wonder-struck himself at the faculty that lay in him, and waves joyfully his long ears: so too the public speaker. Cagliostro, as we know him of old, is not without a certain blubbery oiliness of soul as of body, with vehemence lying under it; has the volublest, noisiest tongue; and in the audacity vulgarly called impudence is without a fellow. The Commonplaces of such Steel-Arch Meetings are soon at his finger-ends: that same blubbery oiliness and vehemence lying under it, once give them an element and stimulus, are the very gift of a fluent public speaker—to Dupeables.

Here too let us mention a circumstance, not insignificant, if true, which it may readily enough be. In younger years, Beppo Balsamo once, it is recorded, took some pains to procure, "from a country vicar," under quite false pretences, "a bit of cotton steeped in holy oils." What could such bit of cotton steeped in holy oils do for him? An Unbeliever from any basis of conviction the unbelieving Beppo could never be; but solely from stupidity and bad morals. Might there not lie in that chaotic blubbery nature of his, at the bottom of all, a certain musk-grain of real Superstitious Belief? How wonderfully

such a musk-grain of Belief will flavour, and impregnate with seductive odour, a whole inward world of Quackery, so that every fibre thereof shall smell *musk*, is well known. No Quack can persuade like him who has himself some persuasion. Nay, so wondrous is the act of Believing, Deception and Self-Deception must, rigorously speaking, coexist in all Quacks; and he perhaps were definable as the best Quack, in whom the smallest musk-grain of the latter would sufficiently flavour the largest mass of the former.

But indeed, as we know otherwise, was there not in Cagliostro a certain pinchbeck counterfeit of all that is golden and good in man, of somewhat even that is best? Cheers, and illuminated hieroglyphs, and the ravishment of thronging audiences, can make him maudlin; his very wickedness of practice will render him louder in eloquence of theory; and "philanthropy," "divine science," "depth of unknown worlds," "finer feelings of the heart," and suchlike shall draw tears from most asses of sensibility. Neither, indeed, is it of moment how *few* his elementary Commonplaces are, how empty his head is, so he but agitate it well: thus a lead-drop or two, put into the emptiest dry-bladder, and jingled to and fro, will make noise enough; and even, if skilfully jingled, a kind of martial music.

Such is the Cagliostric palaver, that bewitches all manner of believing souls. If the ancient Father was named Chrysostom, or Mouth-of-Gold, be the modern Quack named Pinchbeckostom, or Mouth-of-Pinchbeck; in an Age of Bronze such metal finds elective affinities. On the whole, too, it is worth considering what element your Quack specially works in: the element of Wonder! The Genuine, be he artist or artisan, works in the finitude of the Known; the Quack in the infinitude of the Unknown. And then how, in rapidest progression, he grows and advances, once start him! Your name is up, says the adage; you may lie in bed. A nimbus of renown and preternatural astonishment envelops Cagliostro; enchants the general eye. The few reasoning mortals scattered here and there who see through him, deafened in the universal hubbub, shut their lips in sorrowful disdain; confident in the grand remedy, Time. The Enchanter meanwhile rolls on his way; what boundless materials of Deceptibility, what greediness and ignorance, especially what prurient

brute-mindedness, exist over Europe in this the most deceivable of modern ages, are stirred up, fermenting in his behoof. He careers onward as a Comet; his nucleus, of paying and praising Dupes, embraces, in long radius, what city and province he rests over; his thinner tail, of wondering and curious Dupes, stretches into remotest lands. Good Lavater, from amid his Swiss Mountains, could say of him: "Cagliostro, a man; and a man such as few are; in whom, however, I am not a believer. O that he were simple of heart and humble, like a child; that he had feeling for the simplicity of the Gospel, and the majesty of the Lord (*Hoheit des Herrn*)! Who were so great as he? Cagliostro often tells what is not true, and promises what he does not perform. Yet do I nowise hold his operations as deception, though they are not what he calls them." * If good Lavater could so say of him, what must others have been saying!

Comet-wise, progressing with loud flourish of kettle-drums, everywhere under the Steel-Arch, evoking spirits, transmuting metals (to such as could stand it), the Arch-quack has traversed Saxony; at Leipzig has run athwart the hawser of a brother quack (poor Schröpfer, here scarcely recognizable as "*Scieffert*"), and wrecked him. Through Eastern Germany, Prussian Poland, he progresses; and so now at length, in the spring of 1780, has arrived at Petersburg. His pavilion is erected here, his flag prosperously hoisted: Mason-lodges have long ears; he is distributing, as has now become his wont, Spagiric Food, medicine for the poor; a train-oil Prince, Potemkin or something like him, for accounts are dubious, feels his chops water over a seraphic Seraphina: all goes merry, and promises the best. But in those despotic countries, the Police is so arbitrary! Cagliostro's thaumaturgy must be overhauled by the Empress's Physician (Mouncey, a hard Annandale Scot); is found nought, the Spagiric Food unfit for a dog: and so, the whole particulars of his Lordship's conduct being put together, the result is, that he must leave Petersburg, in a given brief term of hours. Happy for him that it was so brief: scarcely is he gone, till the Prussian Ambassador appears with a complaint, that he has falsely assumed the Prussian uniform at Rome; the Spanish Ambassador with a still graver complaint,

* *Lettre du Comte Mirabeau sur Cagliostro et Lavater*, p. 42. (Berl. 1786.)

that he has forged bills at Cadiz. However, he is safe over the marches : let them complain their fill.

In Courland, and in Poland, great things await him ; yet not unalloyed by two small reverses. The famed Countess von der Recke, a born Fair Saint, what the Germans call *Schöne Seele*, as yet quite young in heart and experience, but broken down with grief for departed friends,—seeks to question the world-famous Spirit-summoner on the secrets of the Invisible Kingdoms ; whither, with fond strained eyes, she is incessantly looking. The *galimathias* of Pinchbeckostom cannot impose on this pure-minded simple woman : she recognizes the Quack in him, and in a printed Book makes known the same : Mephisto's mortifying experience with Margaret, as above foretold, renews itself for Cagliostro.* At Warsaw too, though he discourses on Egyptian Masonry, on Medical Philosophy, and the ignorance of Doctors, and performs successfully with *Pupil* and *Columb*, a certain " Count M." cherishes more than doubt ; which ends in certainty, in a written *Cagliostro Unmasked*. The Archquack, triumphant, sumptuously feasted in the city, has retired with a chosen set of believers, with whom, however, was this unbelieving " M.," into the country ; to transmute metals, to prepare perhaps the Pentagon itself. All that night, before leaving Warsaw, " our dear Master " had spent conversing with spirits. Spirits ? cries " M. : " Not he ; but melting ducats : he has a melted mass of them in this crucible, which now, by sleight of hand, he would fain substitute for that other, filled, as you all saw, with red-lead, carefully luted down, smelted, set to cool, smuggled from among our hands, and now (look at it, ye asses !) —found broken and hidden among these bushes !

Neither does the Pentagon, or Elixir of Life, or whatever it was, prosper better. " Our sweet Master enters into expostulation : " " swears by his great God, and his honour, that he will finish the work and make us happy. He carries his modesty so far as to propose that he shall work with chains on his feet ; and consents to lose his life, by the hands of his disciples, if before the end of the *fourth passage*, his word be not made good. He lays his hand on the ground, and kisses it ; holds it up to Heaven, and again takes God to witness that he speaks true ; calls on Him to exterminate him if he lies." A vision of the

* *Zeitgenossen*, No. 15. § *Frau von der Recke.*

hoary-bearded Grand Cophta himself makes night solemn. In vain! The sherds of that broken red-lead crucible, which pretends to stand here unbroken half-full of silver, lie *there*, before your eyes: that "resemblance of a sleeping child," grown visible in the magic cooking of our Elixir, proves to be an inserted rosemary-leaf; the Grand Cophta cannot be gone too soon.

Count "M.," balancing towards the opposite extreme, even thinks him inadequate as a Quack:

"Far from being modest," says this Unmasker, "he brags beyond expression, in anybody's presence, especially in women's, of the grand faculties he possesses. Every word is an exaggeration, or a statement you feel to be improbable. The smallest contradiction puts him in fury: his vanity breaks through on all sides; he lets you give him a festival that sets the whole city a-talking. Most impostors are supple, and endeavour to gain friends. This one, you might say, studies to appear arrogant, to make all men enemies, by his rude injurious speeches, by the squabbles and grudges he introduces among friends." "He quarrels with his coadjutors for trifles; fancies that a simple giving of the lie will persuade the public that they are liars." "Schröpfer at Leipzig was far cleverer." "He should get some ventriloquist for assistant: should read some Books of Chemistry; study the Tricks of Philadelphia and Comus." *

Fair advices, good "M.;" but do not you yourself admit that he has a "natural genius for deception;" above all things "a forehead of brass (*front d'airain*), which nothing can disconcert"? To such a genius, and such a brow, Comus and Philadelphia, and all the ventriloquists in Nature, can add little. Give the Archquack his due. These arrogancies of his prove only that he is mounted on his high horse, and has now the world under him.

Such reverses, which will occur in the lot of every man, are, for our Cagliostro, but as specks in the blaze of the meridian Sun. With undimmed lustre, he is, as heretofore, handed-over from this "Prince P." to that Prince Q.; among which high believing potentates, what is an incredulous "Count M."? His pockets are distended with ducats and diamonds: he is off to Vienna, to Frankfort, to Strasburg, by extra post; and there also will work miracles.

* *Cagliostro démasqué à Varsovie, en* 1780, pp. 35 *et seq.* (Paris, 1786.)

'The train he commonly took with him," says the Inquisition-Biographer, "corresponded to the rest; he always travelled post, with a considerable suite: couriers, lackeys, body-servants, domestics of all sorts, sumptuously dressed, gave an air of reality to the high birth he vaunted. The very liveries he got made at Paris cost twenty *louis* each. Apartments furnished in the height of the mode; a magnificent table, open to numerous guests; rich dresses for himself and his wife, corresponded to this luxurious way of life. His feigned generosity likewise made a great noise. Often he gratuitously doctored the poor, and even gave them alms." *

In the inside of all this splendid travelling and lodging economy are to be seen, as we know, two suspicious-looking rouged or unrouged figures, of a Count and a Countess; lolling on their cushions there, with a jaded, haggard kind of aspect; they eye one another sullenly, in silence, with a scarce-suppressed indignation; for each thinks the other does not work enough and eats too much. Whether Dame Lorenza followed her peculiar side of the business with reluctance or with free alacrity, is a moot-point among Biographers: not so that, with her choleric adipose Archquack, she had a sour life of it, and brawling abounded. If we look still farther inwards, and try to penetrate the inmost self-consciousness, what in another man would be called the conscience, of the Archquack himself, the view gets most uncertain; little or nothing to be seen but a thick fallacious haze. Which indeed *was* the main thing extant there. Much in the Count Front-d'airain remains dubious; yet hardly this: his want of clear insight into anything, most of all into his own inner man. Cunning in the supreme degree he has; intellect next to none. Nay, is not cunning (couple it with an esurient character) the natural consequence of *defective* intellect? It is properly the vehement exercise of a short, poor vision; of an intellect sunk, bemired; which can attain to no free vision, otherwise it would lead the esurient man to be honest.

Meanwhile gleams of muddy light will occasionally visit all mortals; every living creature (according to Milton, the very Devil) has some more or less faint resemblance to a Conscience; must make inwardly certain auricular confessions, absolutions, professions of faith,—were it only

* *Vie de Joseph Balsamo*, p. 41.

that he does not yet quite loathe, and so proceed to hang himself. What such a Porcus as Cagliostro might specially feel, and think, and *be*, were difficult in any case to say; much more when contradiction and mystification, designed and unavoidable, so involve the matter. One of the most authentic documents preserved of him is the Picture of his Visage. An Effigies once universally diffused; in oil-paint, aquatint, marble, stucco, and perhaps gingerbread, decorating millions of apartments: of which remarkable Effigies one copy, engraved in the line-manner, happily still lies here. Fittest of visages; worthy to be worn by the Quack of Quacks! A most portentous face of scoundrelism: a fat, snub, abominable face; dew-lapped, flat-nosed, greasy, full of greediness, sensuality, oxlike obstinacy; a forehead impudent, refusing to be ashamed; and then two eyes turned up seraphically languishing, as in divine contemplation and adoration; a touch of quiz too; on the whole, perhaps the most perfect quack-face produced by the eighteenth century. There he sits, and seraphically languishes, with this epigraph:

De l'Ami des Humains reconnaissez les traits:
Tous ses jours sont marqués par de nouveaux bienfaits,
Il prolonge la vie, il secourt l'indigence;
Le plaisir d'être utile est seul sa récompense.

A probable conjecture were, that this same Theosophy, Theophilanthropy, Solacement of the Poor, to which our Archquack now more and more betook himself, might serve not only as bird-lime for external game, but also half-unconsciously as salve for assuaging his own spiritual sores. Am not I a charitable man? could the Archquack say: if I have erred myself, have I not, by theosophic unctuous discourses, removed much cause of error? The lying, the quackery, what are these but the method of accommodating yourself to the temper of men; of getting their ear, their dull long ear, which Honesty had no chance to catch? Nay, at worst, is not this an unjust world; full of nothing but beasts of prey, four-footed or two-footed? Nature has commanded, saying: Man, help thyself. Ought not the man of my genius, since he was not born a Prince, since in these scandalous times he has not been elected a Prince, to make himself one? If not by open violence, for which he wants military force, then surely by superior science,—exercised in a private way. Heal the diseases of the Poor,

the far deeper diseases of the Ignorant; in a word, found Egyptian Lodges, and get the means of founding them.—By such soliloquies can Count Front-of-brass Pinchbeckostom, in rare atrabiliar hours of self-questionings, compose himself. For the rest, such hours are rare: the Count is a man of action and digestion, not of self-questioning; usually the day brings its abundant task; there is no time for abstractions,—of the metaphysical sort.

Be this as it may, the Count has arrived at Strasburg; is working higher wonders than ever. At Strasburg, indeed, in the year 1783, occurs his apotheosis; what we can call the culmination and Fourth Act of his Life-drama. He was here for a number of months; in full blossom and radiance, the envy and admiration of the world. In large hired hospitals, he with open drug-box containing "Extract of Saturn," and even with open purse, relieves the suffering poor; unfolds himself lamb-like, angelic to a believing few, of the rich classes; turns a silent minatory lion-face to unbelievers, were they of the richest. Medical miracles have in all times been common: but what miracle is this of an Oriental or Occidental Serene-Excellence, who, "regardless of expense," employs himself not in preserving game, but in curing sickness, in illuminating ignorance? Behold how he dives, at noonday, into the infectious hovels of the mean; and on the equipages, haughtinesses, and even dinner-invitations of the great, turns only his negatory front-of-brass! The Prince Cardinal de Rohan, Archbishop of Strasburg, first-class peer of France, of the Blood-royal of Brittany, intimates a wish to see him! he answers: "If Monseigneur the Cardinal is sick, let him come, and I will cure him; if he is well, he has no need of me, I none of him." *

Heaven meanwhile has sent him a few disciples: by a nice tact, he knows his man; to one speaks only of Spagiric Medicine, Downfall of Tyranny, and the Egyptian Lodge; to another, of quite high matters, beyond this diurnal sphere, of visits from the Angel of Light, visits from him of Darkness; passing a Statue of Christ, he will pause with a wondrously accented plaintive "Ha!" as of recognition, as of thousand-years remembrance; and when questioned, sink into mysterious silence. *Is* he the Wandering Jew, then? Heaven knows! At Strasburg, in a word, Fortune not only smiles but laughs upon him: as crowning favour,

* *Mémoires de l'Abbé Georgel*, ii. 48.

he finds here the richest, inflammablest, most open-handed Dupe ever yet vouchsafed him; no other than that same many-titled Louis de Rohan; strong in whose favour, he can laugh again at Fortune.

Let the curious reader look at him, for an instant or two, through the eyes of two eye-witnesses: the Abbé Georgel, Prince Louis's diplomatic Factotum, and Herr Meiners, the Göttingen Professor:

"Admitted at length," says our too-prosing Jesuit Abbé, "to the sanctuary of this Æsculapius, Prince Louis saw, according to his own account, in the incommunicative man's physiognomy, something so dignified, so imposing, that he felt penetrated with a religious awe, and reverence dictated his address. Their interview, which was brief, excited more keenly than ever his desire of farther acquaintance. He attained it at length: and the crafty empiric graduated so cunningly his words and procedure, that he gained, without appearing to court it, the Cardinal's entire confidence, and the greatest ascendency over his will. 'Your soul,' said he one day to the Prince, 'is worthy of mine; you deserve to be made participator of all my secrets.' Such an avowal captivated the whole faculties, intellectual and moral, of a man who at all times had hunted after secrets of alchymy and botany. From this moment their union became intimate and public: Cagliostro went and established himself at Saverne, while his Eminency was residing there; their solitary interviews were long and frequent." . . . "I remember once, having learnt, by a sure way, that Baron de Planta (his Eminency's man of affairs) had frequent, most expensive orgies, in the Archiepiscopal Palace, where Tokay wine ran like water, to regale Cagliostro and his pretended wife, I thought it my duty to inform the Cardinal: his answer was, 'I know it; I have even authorized him to commit abuses, if he judge fit.'" . . . "He came at last to have no other will than Cagliostro's: and to such a length had it gone, that this sham Egyptian, finding it good to quit Strasburg for a time, and retire into Switzerland, the Cardinal, apprised thereof, dispatched his Secretary as well to attend him, as to obtain Predictions from him; such were transmitted in cipher to the Cardinal on every point he needed to consult of" *—

"Before ever I arrived in Strasburg" (hear now the as

* Georgel, *ubi supra.*

prosing Protestant Professor), "I knew almost to a certainty that I should not see Count Cagliostro; at least, not get to speak with him. From many persons I had heard that he, on no account, received visits from curious Travellers, in a state of health; that such as, without being sick, appeared in his audiences were sure to be treated by him, in the brutalest way, as spies." . . . "Nevertheless, though I saw not this new god of Physic near at hand and deliberately, but only for a moment as he rolled on in a rapid carriage, I fancy myself to be better acquainted with him than many that have lived in his society for months." "My unavoidable conviction is, that Count Cagliostro, from of old, has been more of a cheat than an enthusiast; and also that he continues a cheat to this day.

"As to his country I have ascertained nothing. Some make him a Spaniard, others a Jew, or an Italian, or a Ragusan; or even an Arab, who had persuaded some Asiatic Prince to send his son to travel in Europe, and then murdered the youth, and taken possession of his treasures. As the self-styled Count speaks badly all the languages you hear from him, and has most likely spent the greater part of his life under feigned names far from home, it is probable enough no sure trace of his origin may ever be discovered."

"On his first appearance in Strasburg he connected himself with the Freemasons; but only till he felt strong enough to stand on his own feet: he soon gained the favour of the Prætor and the Cardinal; and through these the favour of the Court, to such a degree that his adversaries cannot so much as think of overthrowing him. With the Prætor and Cardinal he is said to demean himself as with persons who were under boundless obligation to him, to whom he was under none: the equipage of the Cardinal he seems to use as freely as his own. He pretends that he can recognize Atheists or Blasphemers by the smell; that the vapour from such throws him into epileptic fits; into which sacred disorder he, like a true juggler, has the art of falling when he likes. In public he no longer vaunts of rule over spirits, or other magical arts; but I know, even as certainly, that he still pretends to evoke spirits, and by their help and apparition to heal diseases, as I know this other fact, that he understands no more of the human system, or the nature of its diseases, or the use of the commonest therapeutic methods, than any other quack."

"According to the crediblest accounts of persons who have

long observed him, he is a man to an inconceivable degree choleric (*heftig*), heedless, inconstant ; and therefore doubtless it was the happiest idea he ever in his whole life came upon, this of making himself inaccessible ; of raising the most obstinate reserve as a bulwark round him ; without which precaution he must long ago have been caught at fault.

" For his own labour he takes neither payment nor present : when presents are made him of such a sort as cannot without offence be refused, he forthwith returns some counter-present, of equal or still higher value. Nay he not only takes nothing from his patients, but frequently admits them, months long, to his house and his table, and will not consent to the smallest recompense. With all this disinterestedness (conspicuous enough, as you may suppose), he lives in an expensive way, plays deep, loses almost constantly to ladies ; so that, according to the very lowest estimate, he must require at least 20,000 livres a-year. The darkness which Cagliostro has, on purpose, spread over the sources of his income and outlay, contributes even more than his munificence and miraculous cures to the notion that he is a divine extraordinary man, who has watched Nature in her deepest operations, and among other secrets stolen that of Gold-making from her." . . . " With a mixture of sorrow and indignation over our age, I have to record that this man has found acceptance, not only among the great, who from of old have been the easiest bewitched by such, but also with many of the learned, and even physicians and naturalists." *

Halcyon days ; only too good to continue ! All glory runs its course ; has its culmination, and then its often precipitous decline. Eminency Rohan, with fervid temper and small instruction, perhaps of dissolute, certainly of dishonest manners, in whom the faculty of Wonder had attained such prodigious development, was indeed the very stranded whale for jackals to feed on : unhappily, however, no one jackal could long be left in solitary possession of him. A sharper-toothed she-jackal now strikes in ; bites infinitely deeper ; stranded whale and he-jackal both are like to become her prey. A young French Mantua-maker, " Countess de La Motte-Valois, descended from Henri II. by the bastard line," without Extract of Saturn, Egyptian Masonry,

* Meiners : *Briefe über die Schweiz* (as quoted in *Mirabeau*).

or any *verbal* conference with Dark Angels,—has genius enough to get her finger in the Archquack's rich Hermetic Projection, appropriate the golden proceeds, and even finally break the crucible. Prince Cardinal Louis de Rohan is off to Paris, under her guidance, to see the long-invisible Queen, or Queen's *Apparition*; to pick up the Rose in the Garden of Trianon, dropt by her fair sham-royal hand; and then—descend rapidly to the Devil, and drag Cagliostro along with him.

The intelligent reader observes, we have now arrived at that stupendous business of the *Diamond Necklace*: into the dark complexities of which we need not here do more than glance: who knows but, next month, our Historical Chapter, written specially on this subject, may itself see the light? Enough, for the present, if we fancy vividly the poor whale Cardinal, so deep in the adventure that Grand-Cophtic "predictions transmitted in cipher" will no longer illuminate him; but the Grand Cophta must leave all masonic or other business, happily begun in Naples, Bourdeaux, Lyons, and come personally to Paris with predictions at first hand. "The new Calchas," says poor Abbé Georgel, "must have read the entrails of his victim ill; for, on issuing from these communications with the Angel of Light and of Darkness, he prophesied to the Cardinal that this happy correspondence," with the Queen's Similitude, "would place him at the highest point of favour; that his influence in the Government would soon become paramount; that he would use it for the propagation of good principles, the glory of the Supreme Being, and the happiness of Frenchmen." The new Calchas was indeed at fault: but how could he be otherwise? Let these high Queen's-favours, and all terrestrial shiftings of the wind, turn as they will, *his* reign, he can well see, is appointed to be temporary; in the mean while, Tokay flows like water; prophecies of good, not of evil, are the method to keep it flowing. Thus if, for Circe de La Motte-Valois, the Egyptian Masonry is but a foolish enchanted cup wherewith to turn her fat Cardinal into a quadruped, she herself converse-wise, for the Grand Cophta, is one who must ever fodder said quadruped with Court hopes, and stall-feed him fatter and fatter,—it is expected, for the knife of *both* parties. They are mutually useful; live in peace, and Tokay festivity, though mutually suspicious, mutually contemptuous. So stand matters through the spring and summer months of the year 1785.

But fancy next that—while Tokay is flowing within doors, and abroad Egyptian Lodges are getting founded, and gold and glory, from Paris as from other cities, supernaturally coming in,—the latter end of August has arrived, and with it Commissary Chesnon, to lodge the whole unholy Brotherhood, from Cardinal down to Sham-queen, in separate cells of the Bastille! There, for nine long months, let them howl and wail, in bass or in treble; and emit the falsest of false *Mémoires*; among which that *Mémoire pour le Comte de Cagliostro, en présence des autres Co-Accusés*, with its Trebisond Acharats, Scherifs of Mecca, and Nature's unfortunate Child, all gravely printed with French types in the year 1786, may well bear the palm. Fancy that Necklace or Diamonds will nowhere unearth themselves; that the Tuileries Palace sits struck with astonishment and speechless chagrin; that Paris, that all Europe, is ringing with the wonder. That Count Front-of-Brass Pinchbeckostom, confronted, at the judgment-bar, with a shrill glib Circe de La Motte, has need of all his eloquence; that nevertheless the Front-of-brass prevails, and exasperated Circe "throws a candlestick at him." Finally, that on the 31st of May 1786, the assembled Parliament of Paris, "at nine in the evening, after a sitting of eighteen hours," has solemnly pronounced judgment: and now that Cardinal Louis is gone "to his estates;" Countess de La Motte is shaven on the head, branded, with red-hot iron, "V" (*Voleuse*) on both shoulders, and confined for life to the Salpêtrière; her Count wandering uncertain, with diamonds for sale, over the British Empire; that the Sieur de Villette, for handling a queen's pen, is banished forever; the tooqueenlike Demoiselle Gay d'Oliva (with her unfathered infant) "put out of Court;"—and Grand Cophta Cagliostro liberated indeed, but pillaged, and ordered forthwith to take himself away. His disciples illuminate their windows; but what does that avail? Commissary Chesnon, Bastille-Governor De Launay cannot recollect the least particular of those priceless effects, those gold-rouleaus, repeating watches of his: he must even retire to Passy that very night; and two days afterwards, sees nothing for it but Boulogne and England. Thus does the miserable pickle-herring tragedy of the Diamond Necklace wind itself up, and wind Cagliostro once more to inhospitable shores.

Arrived here, and lodged tolerably in "Sloane Street, Knightsbridge," by the aid of a certain Mr. Swinton, whilom

broken Wine-merchant, now Apothecary, to whom he carries introductions, he can drive a small trade in Egyptian pills, such as one "sells *in Paris* at thirty-shillings the dram;" in unctuously discoursing to Egyptian Lodges; in "giving public audiences as at Strasburg,"—if so be any one will bite. At all events, he can, by the aid of amanuensis-disciples, compose and publish his *Lettre au Peuple Anglais*; setting forth his unheard-of generosities, unheard-of injustices suffered, in a world not worthy of him, at the hands of English Lawyers, Bastille-Governors, French Counts, and others; his *Lettre aux Français*, singing to the same tune, predicting too, what many inspired Editors had already boded, that "the Bastille would be destroyed," and "a King would come who should govern by States-General." But, alas, the shafts of Criticism are busy with him; so many hostile eyes look towards him; the world, in short, is getting too hot for him. Mark, nevertheless, how the brow of brass quails not; nay a touch of his old poetic Humour, even in this sad crisis, unexpectedly unfolds itself.

One De Morande, Editor of a *Courrier de l'Europe* published here at that period, has for some time made it his distinction to be the foremost of Cagliostro's enemies. Cagliostro, enduring much in silence, happens once, in some "public audience," to mention a practice he had witnessed in Arabia the Stony: the people there, it seems, are in the habit of fattening a few pigs annually, on provender mixed with arsenic, whereby the whole pig-carcass by and by becomes, so to speak, arsenical; the arsenical pigs are then let loose in the woods; eaten by lions, leopards and other ferocious creatures; which latter naturally all die in consequence, and so the woods are cleared of them. This adroit practice the Sieur Morande thought a proper subject for banter; and accordingly, in his Seventeenth and two following Numbers, made merry enough with it. Whereupon Count Front-of-brass, whose patience has limits, writes as Advertisement (still to be read in old files of the *Public Advertiser*, under date September 3, 1786), a French Letter, not without causticity and aristocratic disdain; challenging the witty Sieur to breakfast with him, for the 9th of November next, in the face of the world, on an actual Sucking Pig, fattened by Cagliostro, but cooked, carved and selected from by the Sieur Morande,—under bet of Five Thousand Guineas sterling that, next morning thereafter, he the Sieur Morande shall be dead, and Count Cagliostro be alive!

The poor Sieur durst not cry, Done ; and backed-out of the transaction, making wry faces. Thus does a kind of red coppery splendour encircle our Archquack's decline ; thus with brow of brass, grim smiling, does he meet his destiny.

But suppose we should now, from these foreign scenes turn homewards, for a moment, into the native alley in Palermo ! Palermo, with its dinginess, its mud or dust, the old black Balsamo House, the very beds and chairs, all are still standing there ; and Beppo has altered so strangely, has wandered so far away. Let us look ; for happily we have the fairest opportunity.

In April 1787, Palermo contained a Traveller of a thousand ; no other than the great Goethe from Weimar. At his Table-d'hôte he heard much of Cagliostro ; at length also of a certain Palermo Lawyer, who had been engaged by the French Government to draw up an authentic genealogy and memoir of him. This Lawyer, and even the rude draft of his Memoir, he with little difficulty gets to see ; inquires next whether it were not possible to see the actual Balsamo Family, whereof it appears the mother and a widowed sister still survive. For this matter, however, the Lawyer can do nothing ; only refer him to his Clerk ; who again starts difficulties : To get at those genealogic Documents he has been obliged to invent some story of a Government-Pension being in the wind for those poor Balsamos ; and now that the whole matter is finished, and the Paper sent off to France, has nothing so much at heart as to keep out of their way :

" So said the Clerk. However, as I could not abandon my purpose, we after some study concerted that I should give myself out for an Englishman, and bring the family news of Cagliostro, who had lately got out of the Bastille, and gone to London.

" At the appointed hour, it might be three in the afternoon, we set forth. The house lay in the corner of an Alley, not far from the main street named *Il Casaro*. We ascended a miserable staircase, and came straight into the kitchen. A woman of middle stature, broad and stout, yet not corpulent, stood busy washing the kitchen-dishes. She was decently dressed ; and, on our entrance, turned-up the one end of her apron, to hide the soiled side from us. She joyfully recognized my conductor, and said : ' Signor Giovanni, do you bring us good news ? Have you made out anything ? '

" He answered : ' In our affair, nothing yet ; but here is

a Stranger that brings a salutation from your Brother, and can tell you how he is at present.'

" The salutation I was to bring stood not in our agreement : meanwhile, one way or other, the introduction was accomplished. ' You know my Brother ? ' inquired she.— ' All Europe knows him,' answered I ; ' and I fancied it would gratify you to hear that he is now in safety and well ; as, of late, no doubt you have been anxious about him.'— ' Step in,' said she ; ' I will follow you directly ; ' and with the Clerk I entered the room.

" It was large and high ; and might, with us, have passed for a saloon ; it seemed, indeed, to be almost the sole lodging of the family. A single window lighted the large walls, which had once had colour ; and on which were black pictures of saints, in gilt frames, hanging round. Two large beds, without curtains, stood at one wall ; a brown press, in the form of a writing-desk, at the other. Old rush-bottomed chairs, the backs of which had once been gilt, stood by ; and the tiles of the floor were in many places worn deep into hollows. For the rest, all was cleanly ; and we approached the family, which sat assembled at the one window, in the other end of the apartment.

" Whilst my guide was explaining, to the old Widow Balsamo, the purpose of our visit, and by reason of her deafness had to repeat his words several times aloud, I had time to observe the chamber and the other persons in it. A girl of about sixteen, well formed, whose features had become uncertain by small-pox, stood at the window ; beside her a young man, whose disagreeable look, deformed by the same disease, also struck me. In an easy-chair, right before the window, sat or rather lay a sick, much misshapen person, who appeared to labour under a sort of lethargy.

" My guide having made himself understood, we were invited to take seats. The old woman put some questions to me ; which, however, I had to get interpreted before I could answer them, the Sicilian dialect not being quite at my command.

" Meanwhile I looked at the aged widow with satisfaction. She was of middle stature, but well shaped ; over her regular features, which age had not deformed, lay that sort of peace usual with people that have lost their hearing ; the tone of her voice was soft and agreeable.

" I answered her questions ; and my answers also had again to be interpreted for her.

"The slowness of our conversation gave me leisure to measure my words. I told her that her son had been acquitted in France, and was at present in England, where he met with good reception. Her joy, which she testified at these things, was mixed with expressions of a heartfelt piety; and as she now spoke a little louder and slower, I could the better understand her.

"In the mean time the daughter had entered; and taken her seat beside my conductor, who repeated to her faithfully what I had been narrating. She had put-on a clean apron; had set her hair in order under the net-cap. The more I looked at her, and compared her with her mother, the more striking became the difference of the two figures. A vivacious healthy Sensualism (*Sinnlichkeit*) beamed forth from the whole structure of the daughter; she might be a woman of about forty. With brisk blue eyes she looked sharply round; yet in her look I could trace no suspicion. When she sat, her figure promised more height than it showed when she rose: her posture was determinate, she sat with her body leaned forwards, the hands resting on the knees. For the rest, her physiognomy, more of the snubby than the sharp sort, reminded me of her Brother's Portrait, familiar to us in engravings. She asked me several things about my journey, my purpose to see Sicily; and was sure I would come back, and celebrate the Feast of Saint Rosalia with them.

"As the grandmother, meanwhile, had again put some questions to me, and I was busy answering her, the daughter kept speaking to my companion half-aloud, yet so that I could take occasion to ask what it was. He answered: Signora Capitummino was telling him that her Brother owed her fourteen gold Ounces; on his sudden departure from Palermo, she had redeemed several things for him that were in pawn; but never since that day had either heard from him, or got money or any other help, though it was said he had great riches, and made a princely outlay. Now would not I perhaps undertake on my return, to remind him, in a handsome way, of the debt, and procure some assistance for her; nay would I not carry a Letter with me, or at all events get it carried? I offered to do so. She asked where I lodged, whither she must send the Letter to me? I avoided naming my abode, and offered to call next day towards night, and receive the Letter myself.

" She thereupon described to me her untoward situation : how she was a widow with three children, of whom the one girl was getting educated in a convent, the other was here present, and her son just gone out to his lesson. How, besides these three children, she had her mother to maintain ; and moreover out of Christian love had taken the unhappy sick person there to her house, whereby the burden was heavier ; how all her industry would scarcely suffice to get necessaries for herself and hers. She knew indeed that God did not leave good works unrewarded ; yet must sigh very sore under the load she had long borne.

" The young people mixed in the dialogue, and our conversation grew livelier. While speaking with the others, I could hear the good old widow ask her daughter : If I belonged, then, to their holy Religion ? I remarked also that the daughter strove, in a prudent way, to avoid an answer ; signifying to her mother, so far as I could take it up : That the Stranger seemed to have a kind feeling towards them ; and that it was not well-bred to question any one straightway on that point.

" As they heard that I was soon to leave Palermo, they became more pressing, and importuned me to come back ; especially vaunting the paradisaic days of the Rosalia Festival, the like of which was not to be seen and tasted in all the world.

" My attendant, who had long been anxious to get off, at last put an end to the interview by his gestures ; and I promised to return on the morrow evening, and take the Letter. My attendant expressed his joy that all had gone off so well, and we parted mutually content.

" You may fancy the impression this poor and pious, well-dispositioned family had made on me. My curiosity was satisfied ; but their natural and worthy bearing had raised an interest in me, which reflection did but increase.

" Forthwith, however, there arose for me anxieties about the following day. It was natural that this appearance of mine, which, at the first moment, had taken them by surprise, should, after my departure, awaken many reflections. By the Genealogy I knew that several others of the family were in life : it was natural that they should call their friends together, and in the presence of all, get those things repeated which, the day before, they had heard from me with admiration. My object was attained ; there remained

nothing more than, in some good fashion, to end the adventure. I accordingly repaired next day, directly after dinner, alone to their house. They expressed surprise as I entered. The Letter was not ready yet, they said; and some of their relations wished to make my acquaintance, who towards night would be there.

" I answered, that having to set off to-morrow morning, and visits still to pay, and packing to transact, I had thought it better to come early than not at all.

" Meanwhile the son entered, whom yesterday I had not seen. He resembled his sister in size and figure. He brought the Letter they were to give me; he had, as is common in those parts, got it written out of doors, by one of their Notaries that sit publicly to do such things. The young man had a still, melancholy and modest aspect; inquired after his Uncle, asked about his riches and outlays, and added sorrowfully, Why had he so forgotten his kindred? ' It were our greatest fortune,' continued he, ' should he once return hither, and take notice of us: but,' continued he, ' how came he to let you know that he had relatives in Palermo? It is said, he everywhere denies us, and gives himself out for a man of great birth.' I answered this question, which had now arisen by the imprudence of my Guide at our first entrance, in such sort as to make it seem that the Uncle, though he might have reason for concealing his birth from the public, did yet, towards his friends and acquaintance, keep it no secret.

" The sister, who had come up during this dialogue, and by the presence of her brother, perhaps also by the absence of her yesterday's friend, had got more courage, began also to speak with much grace and liveliness. They begged me earnestly to recommend them to their Uncle, if I wrote to him; and not less earnestly, when once I should have made this journey through the Island, to come back and pass the Rosalia Festival with them.

" The mother spoke in accordance with her children. ' Sir,' said she, ' though it is not seemly, as I have a grown daughter, to see stranger gentlemen in my house, and one has to guard against both danger and evil-speaking, yet shall you ever be welcome to us, when you return to this city.'

" ' O yes,' answered the young ones, ' we will lead the Gentleman all round the Festival; we will show him everything, get a place on the scaffolds, where the grand sights

are seen best. What will he say to the great Chariot, and more than all, to the glorious Illumination ! '

" Meanwhile the Grandmother had read the Letter and again read it. Hearing that I was about to take leave, she arose, and gave me the folded sheet. ' Tell my son,' began she with a noble vivacity, nay with a sort of inspiration, ' Tell my son how happy the news have made me, which you brought from him ! Tell him that I clasp him to my heart '—here she stretched out her arms asunder, and pressed them again together on her breast—' that I daily beseech God and our Holy Virgin for him in prayer ; that I give him and his wife my blessing ; and that I wish before my end to see him again with these eyes, which have shed so many tears for him.'

" The peculiar grace of the Italian tongue favoured the choice and noble arrangement of these words, which moreover were accompanied with lively gestures, wherewith that nation can add such a charm to spoken words.

" I took my leave, not without emotion. They all gave me their hands ; the children showed me out ; and as I went down stairs, they jumped to the balcony of the kitchen-window, which projected over the street ; called after me, threw me salutes, and repeated, that I must in no wise forget to come back. I saw them still on the balcony, when I turned the corner." *

Poor old Felicità, and must thy pious prayers, thy motherly blessings, and so many tears shed by those old eyes, be all in vain ! To thyself, in any case, they were blessed.—As for the Signora Capitummino, with her three fatherless children, shall we not hope at least, that the fourteen gold Ounces were paid, by a sure hand, and so her heavy burden, for some space, lightened a little ? Alas, no, it would seem ; owing to accidents, not even that ! †

Count Cagliostro, all this while, is rapidly proceeding with his Fifth Act ; the red coppery splendour darkens more and more into final gloom. Some boiling muddleheads of a dupeable sort there still are in England : Popish-Riot Lord George, for instance, will walk with him to Count Barthélemy's or D'Adhémar's ; and, in bad French and worse rhetoric, abuse the Queen of France : but what does it profit ? Lord George must one day (after noise enough) revisit Newgate for it ; and in the meanwhile,

* Goethe's *Werke* (*Italiänische Reise*), xxviii. 146. † *Ibid.*

hard words pay no scores. Apothecary Swinton begins to get wearisome ; French spies look ominously in ; Egyptian Pills are slack of sale ; the old vulturous Attorney-host anew scents carrion, is bestirring itself anew : Count Cagliostro, in the May of 1787, must once more leave England. But whither ? Ah, whither ! At Bâle, at Bienne, over Switzerland, the game is up. At Aix in Savoy, there are baths, but no gudgeons in them : at Turin, his Majesty of Sardinia meets you with an order to begone on the instant. A like fate from the Emperor Joseph at Roveredo ;—before the *Liber memorialis de Caleostro dum esset Roboretti* could extend to many pages ! Count Front-of-brass begins confessing himself to priests : yet " at Trent paints a new hieroglyphic Screen,"—touching last flicker of a light that once burnt so high ! He pawns diamond buckles ; wanders necessitous hither and thither ; repents, unrepents ; knows not what to do. For Destiny has her nets round him ; they are straitening, straitening ; too soon he will be *ginned* !

Driven out from Trent, what shall he make of the new hieroglyphic Screen, what of himself ? The wayworn Grand-Cophtess has begun to blab family secrets ; she longs to be in Rome, by her mother's hearth, by her mother's grave ; in any nook, where so much as the shadow of refuge waits her. To the desperate Count Front-of-brass all places are nearly alike : urged by female babble, he will go to Rome, then ; why not ? On a May-day, of the year 1789 (when such glorious work had just begun in France, to him all forbidden !), he enters the Eternal City ; it was his doom-summons that called him thither. On the 29th of next December, the Holy Inquisition, long watchful enough, detects him founding some feeble moneyless ghost of an Egyptian Lodge ; " picks him off," as the military say, and locks him hard and fast in the Castle of St. Angelo :

Lasciate ogni speranza, voi che 'ntrate !

Count Cagliostro did not lose all hope : nevertheless a few words will now suffice for him. In vain, with his mouth of pinchbeck and his front of brass, does he heap chimera on chimera ; demand religious Books (which are freely given him) ; demand clean Linen, and an interview with his Wife (which are refused him) ; assert now that the Egyptian Masonry is a divine system, accommodated to erring and gullible men, which the Holy Father, when he knows it,

will patronize; anon that there are some four millions of Freemasons, spread over Europe, all sworn to exterminate Priest and King, wherever met with: in vain! they will not acquit him, as misunderstood Theophilanthropist; will not emit him, in Pope's pay, as renegade Masonic Spy: "he can't get out." Donna Lorenza languishes, invisible to him, in a neighbouring cell; begins at length to *confess*! Whereupon he too, in torrents, will emit confessions and forestall her: these the Inquisition pocket and sift (whence this *Life of Balsamo*); but will not let him out. In fine, after some eighteen months of the weariest hounding, doubling, worrying and standing at bay, His Holiness gives sentence: The Manuscript of Egyptian Masonry is to be burnt by hand of the common Hangman, and all that intermeddle with such Masonry are accursed; Giuseppe Balsamo, justly forfeited of life for being a Freemason, shall nevertheless in mercy be forgiven; instructed in the duties of penitence, and even kept safe thenceforth and till death,—in ward of Holy Church. Ill-starred Acharat, must it so end with thee? This was in April 1791.

He addressed (how vainly!) an appeal to the French Constituent Assembly. As was said, in Heaven, in Earth, or in Hell there was no Assembly that could well take his part. For four years more, spent one knows not how,—most probably in the furor of edacity, with insufficient cookery, and the stupor of indigestion,—the curtain lazily falls. There rotted and gave way the cordage of a tough heart. One summer morning of the year 1795, the Body of Cagliostro is still found in the prison of St. Leo; but Cagliostro's Self has escaped,—*whither* no man yet knows. The brow of brass, behold how it has got all unlacquered; these pinchbeck lips can lie no more: Cagliostro's work is ended, and now only his *account* to present. As the Scherif of Mecca said, "Nature's unfortunate child, adieu!"

Such, according to our comprehension thereof, is the rise, progress, grandeur and decadence of the Quack of Quacks. Does the reader ask, What good was in it; Why occupy his time and ours with the biography of such a miscreant? We answer, It was stated on the very threshold of this matter, in the loftiest terms, by Herr Sauerteig, that the Lives of all Eminent Persons, miscreant or creant, ought to be written. Thus has not the very Devil his *Life*,

deservedly written not by Daniel Defoe only, but by quite other hands than Daniel's? For the rest, the Thing represented on these pages is no Sham, but a Reality; thou hast it, O reader, as we have it: Nature was pleased to produce even such a man, even so, not otherwise; and the Editor of this Magazine is here mainly to record, in an adequate manner, what *she*, of her thousandfold mysterious richness and greatness, produces.

But the moral lesson? Where is the moral lesson? Foolish reader, in every Reality, nay in every genuine Shadow of a Reality (what we call Poem), there lie a hundred such, or a million such, according as thou hast the *eye* to read them! Of which hundred or million lying *here* in the present Reality, couldst not thou, for example, be advised to take this one, to thee worth all the rest: "Behold, I too have attained that immeasurable, mysterious glory of being *alive*; to me also a Capability has been intrusted; shall I strive to work it out, manlike, into Faithfulness, and Doing; or, quacklike, into Eatableness, and Similitude of Doing? Or why not rather, gigman-like, and following the 'respectable' countless multitude,—into *both*?" The decision is of quite *infinite* moment; see thou make it aright.

But in fine, look at this matter of Cagliostro, as at all matters, with thy heart, with thy whole mind; no longer merely squint at it with the poor side-glance of thy calculative faculty. Look at it not *logically* only, but *mystically*. Thou shalt in sober truth see it (as Sauerteig asserted) to be a Pasquillant verse, of most inspired writing in its kind, in that same "Grand Bible of Universal History;" wondrously and even indispensably connected with the Heroic portions that stand there; even as the all-showing Light is with the Darkness wherein nothing can be seen; as the hideous taloned *roots* are with the fair *boughs*, and their leaves and flowers and fruit; both of which, and not one of which, make the Tree. Think also whether thou hast known no Public Quacks, on far higher scale than this, whom a Castle of St. Angelo never could get hold of; and how, as Emperors, Chancellors (having found much fitter machinery), they could run their Quack-career; and make whole kingdoms, whole continents, into one huge Egyptian Lodge, and squeeze supplies of money or of blood from it at discretion? Also, whether thou even now knowest not Private Quacks, innumerable as the sea-sands, toiling as

mere *Half*-Cagliostros ; imperfect, hybrid-quacks, of whom Cagliostro is as the unattainable ideal and type-specimen ? Such is the world. Understand it, despise it, love it ; cheerfully hold on thy way through it, with thy eye on higher load-stars !

CHARACTERISTICS

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[1831]

THE healthy know not of their health, but only the sick: this is the Physician's Aphorism; and applicable in a far wider sense than he gives it. We may say, it holds no less in moral, intellectual, political, poetical, than in merely corporeal therapeutics; that wherever, or in what shape soever, powers of the sort which can be named *vital* are at work, herein lies the test of their working right or working wrong.

In the Body, for example, as all doctors are agreed, the first condition of complete health is, that each organ perform its function unconsciously, unheeded; let but any organ announce its separate existence, were it even boastfully, and for pleasure, not for pain, then already has one of those unfortunate "false centres of sensibility" established itself, already is derangement there. The perfection of bodily well-being is, that the collective bodily activities seem one; and be manifested, moreover, not in themselves, but in the action they accomplish. If a Dr. Kitchiner boast that his system is in high order, Dietetic Philosophy may indeed take credit; but the true Peptician was that Countryman who answered that, "for his part, he had no system." In fact, unity, agreement is always silent, or soft-voiced; it is only discord that loudly proclaims itself. So long as the several elements of Life, all fitly adjusted, can pour forth their movements like harmonious tuned strings, it is a melody and unison; Life, from its mysterious fountains, flows out as in celestial music and diapason,—which also, like that other music of the spheres, even because it is perennial and complete, without interruption and without imperfection, might be fabled to escape the ear. Thus, too, in some languages, is

the state of health well denoted by a term expressing unity ; when we feel ourselves as we wish to be, we say that we are *whole*.

Few mortals, it is to be feared, are permanently blessed with that felicity of " having no system ; " nevertheless, most of us, looking back on young years, may remember seasons of a light, aërial translucency and elasticity and perfect freedom ; the body had not yet become the prison-house of the soul, but was its vehicle and implement, like a creature of the thought, and altogether pliant to its bidding. We knew not that we had limbs, we only lifted, hurled, and leapt ; through eye and ear, and all avenues of sense, came clear unimpeded tidings from without, and from within issued clear victorious force ; we stood as in the centre of Nature, giving and receiving, in harmony with it all ; unlike Virgil's Husbandmen, " too happy *because* we did not know our Blessedness." In those days, health and sickness were foreign traditions that did not concern us ; our whole being was as yet One, the whole man like an incorporated Will. Such, were Rest or ever-successful Labour the human lot, might our life continue to be : a pure, perpetual, unregarded music ; a beam of perfect white light, rendering all things visible, but itself unseen, even because it was of that perfect whiteness, and no irregular obstruction had yet broken it into colours. The beginning of Inquiry is Disease : all Science, if we consider well, as it must have originated in the feeling of something being wrong, so it is and continues to be but Division, Dismemberment, and partial healing of the wrong. Thus, as was of old written, the Tree of Knowledge springs from a root of evil, and bears fruits of good and evil. Had Adam remained in Paradise, there had been no Anatomy and no Metaphysics.

But, alas, as the Philosopher declares, " Life itself is a disease ; a working incited by suffering ; " action from passion ! The memory of that first state of Freedom and paradisaic Unconsciousness has faded away into an ideal poetic dream. We stand here too conscious of many things : with Knowledge, the symptom of Derangement, we must even do our best to restore a little Order. Life is, in few instances, and at rare intervals, the diapason of a heavenly melody ; oftenest the fierce jar of disruptions and convulsions, which, do what we will, there is no disregarding. Nevertheless, such is still the wish of Nature on our

behalf; in all vital action, her manifest purpose and effort is, that we should be unconscious of it, and, like the peptic Countryman, never know that we "have a system." For, indeed, vital action everywhere is emphatically a means, not an end; Life is not given us for the mere sake of Living, but always with an ulterior external Aim: neither is it on the process, on the means, but rather on the result, that Nature, in any of her doings, is wont to intrust us with insight and volition. Boundless as is the domain of man, it is but a small fractional proportion of it that he rules with Consciousness and by Forethought: what he can contrive, nay what he can altogether know and comprehend, is essentially the mechanical, small; the great is ever, in one sense or other, the vital; it is essentially the mysterious, and only the surface of it can be understood. But Nature, it might seem, strives, like a kind mother, to hide us from even this, that she is a mystery: she will have us rest on her beautiful and awful bosom as if it were our secure home; on the bottomless boundless Deep, whereon all human things fearfully and wonderfully swim, she will have us walk and build, as if the film which supported us there (which any scratch of a bare bodkin will rend asunder, any sputter of a pistol-shot instantaneously burn up) were no film, but a solid rock-foundation. Forever in the neighbourhood of an inevitable Death, man can forget that he is born to die; of his Life, which, strictly meditated, contains in it an Immensity and an Eternity, he can conceive lightly, as of a simple implement wherewith to do day-labour and earn wages. So cunningly does Nature, the Mother of all highest Art, which only apes her from afar, "body forth the Finite from the Infinite;" and guide man safe on his wondrous path, not more by endowing him with vision, than, at the right place, with blindness! Under all her works, chiefly under her noblest work, Life, lies a basis of Darkness, which she benignantly conceals; in Life too, the roots and inward circulations which stretch down fearfully to the regions of Death and Night, shall not hint of their existence, and only the fair stem with its leaves and flowers, shone on by the fair sun, shall disclose itself, and joyfully grow.

However, without venturing into the abstruse, or too eagerly asking Why and How, in things where our answer must needs prove, in great part, an echo of the question, let us be content to remark farther, in the merely historical

way, how that Aphorism of the bodily Physician holds good in quite other departments. Of the Soul, with her activities, we shall find it no less true than of the Body: nay, cry the Spiritualists, is not that very division of the unity, Man, into a dualism of Soul and Body, itself the symptom of disease; as, perhaps, your frightful theory of Materialism, of his being but a Body, and therefore, at least, once more a unity, may be the paroxysm which was critical, and the beginning of cure! But omitting this, we observe, with confidence enough, that the truly strong mind, view it as Intellect, as Morality, or under any other aspect, is nowise the mind acquainted with its strength; that here as before the sign of health is Unconsciousness. In our inward, as in our outward world, what is mechanical lies open to us; not what is dynamical and has vitality. Of our Thinking, we might say, it is but the mere upper surface that we shape into articulate Thoughts;—underneath the region of argument and conscious discourse, lies the region of meditation; here, in its quiet mysterious depths, dwells what vital force is in us; here, if aught is to be created, and not merely manufactured and communicated, must the work go on. Manufacture is intelligible, but trivial; Creation is great, and cannot be understood. Thus if the Debater and Demonstrator, whom we may rank as the lowest of true thinkers, knows what he has done, and how he did it, the Artist, whom we rank as the highest, knows not; must speak of Inspiration, and in one or the other dialect, call his work the gift of a divinity.

But on the whole "genius is ever a secret to itself;" of this old truth we have, on all sides, daily evidence. The Shakspeare takes no airs for writing *Hamlet* and the *Tempest*, understands not that it is anything surprising: Milton, again, is more conscious of his faculty, which accordingly is an inferior one. On the other hand, what cackling and strutting must we not often hear and see, when, in some shape of academical prolusion, maiden speech, review article, this or the other well-fledged goose has produced its goose-egg, of quite measurable value, were it the pink of its whole kind; and wonders why all mortals do not wonder!

Foolish enough, too, was the College Tutor's surprise at Walter Shandy: how, though unread in Aristotle, he could nevertheless argue; and not knowing the name of any dialectic tool, handled them all to perfection. Is it the skilfulest anatomist that cuts the best figure at Sadler's Wells?

or does the boxer hit better for knowing that he has a *flexor longus* and a *flexor brevis*? But indeed, as in the higher case of the Poet, so here in that of the Speaker and Inquirer, the true force is an unconscious one. The healthy Understanding, we should say, is not the Logical, argumentative, but the Intuitive; for the end of Understanding is not to prove and find reasons, but to know and believe. Of logic, and its limits, and uses and abuses, there were much to be said and examined; one fact, however, which chiefly concerns us here, has long been familiar: that the man of logic and the man of insight; the Reasoner and the Discoverer, or even Knower, are quite separable,—indeed, for most part, quite separate characters. In practical matters, for example, has it not become almost proverbial that the man of logic cannot prosper? This is he whom business-people call Systematic and Theorizer and Word-monger; his *vital* intellectual force lies dormant or extinct, his whole force is mechanical, conscious: of such a one it is foreseen that, when once confronted with the infinite complexities of the real world, his little compact theorem of the world will be found wanting; that unless he can throw it overboard and become a new creature, he will necessarily founder. Nay, in mere Speculation itself, the most ineffectual of all characters, generally speaking, is your dialectic man-at-arms; were he armed cap-a-pie in syllogistic mail of proof, and perfect master of logic-fence, how little does it avail him! Consider the old Schoolmen, and their pilgrimage towards Truth: the faithfulest endeavour, incessant unwearied motion, often great natural vigour; only no progress: nothing but antic feats of one limb poised against the other; there they balanced, somersetted, and made postures; at best gyrated swiftly, with some pleasure, like Spinning Dervishes, and ended where they began. So is it, so will it always be, with all System-makers and builders of logical card-castles; of which class a certain remnant must, in every age, as they do in our own, survive and build. Logic is good, but it is not the best. The Irrefragable Doctor, with his chains of induction, his corollaries, dilemmas and other cunning logical diagrams and apparatus, will cast you a beautiful horoscope, and speak reasonable things; nevertheless your stolen jewel, which you wanted him to find you, is not forthcoming. Often by some winged word, winged as the thunderbolt is, of a Luther, a Napoleon, a Goethe, shall we see the difficulty split asunder, and its secret laid bare; while the Irrefragable,

with all his logical tools, hews at it, and hovers round it, and finds it on all hands too hard for him.

Again, in the difference between Oratory and Rhetoric, as indeed everywhere in that superiority of what is called the Natural over the Artificial, we find a similar illustration. The Orator persuades and carries all with him, he knows not how; the Rhetorician can prove that he ought to have persuaded and carried all with him: the one is in a state of healthy unconsciousness, as if he "had no system;" the other, in virtue of regimen and dietetic punctuality, feels at best that "his system is in high order." So stands it, in short, with all the forms of Intellect, whether as directed to the finding of truth, or to the fit imparting thereof; to Poetry, to Eloquence, to depth of Insight, which is the basis of both these; always the characteristic of right performance is a certain spontaneity, an unconsciousness; "the healthy know not of their health, but only the sick." So that the old precept of the critic, as crabbed as it looked to his ambitious disciple, might contain in it a most fundamental truth, applicable to us all, and in much else than Literature: "Whenever you have written any sentence that looks particularly excellent, be sure to blot it out." In like manner, under milder phraseology, and with a meaning purposely much wider, a living Thinker has taught us: "Of the Wrong we are always conscious, of the Right never."

But if such is the law with regard to Speculation and the Intellectual power of man, much more is it with regard to Conduct, and the power, manifested chiefly therein, which we name Moral. "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:" whisper not to thy own heart, How worthy is this action!—for then it is already becoming worthless. The good man is he who *works* continually in welldoing; to whom welldoing is as his natural existence, awakening no astonishment, requiring no commentary; but there, like a thing of course, and as if it could not but be so. Self-contemplation, on the other hand, is infallibly the symptom of disease, be it or be it not the sign of cure. An unhealthy Virtue is one that consumes itself to leanness in repenting and anxiety; or, still worse, that inflates itself into dropsical boastfulness and vainglory: either way, there is a self-seeking; an unprofitable looking behind us to measure the way we have made: whereas the sole concern is to walk continually forward, and make more way. If in any sphere of man's life, then in the Moral sphere, as

the inmost and most vital of all, it is good that there be wholeness; that there be unconsciousness, which is the evidence of this. Let the free, reasonable Will, which dwells in us, as in our Holy of Holies, be indeed free, and obeyed like a Divinity, as is its right and its effort: the perfect obedience will be the silent one. Such perhaps were the sense of that maxim, enunciating, as is usual, but the half of a truth: To say that we have a clear conscience, is to utter a solecism; had we never sinned, we should have had no conscience. Were defeat unknown, neither would victory be celebrated by songs of triumph.

This, true enough, is an ideal, impossible state of being; yet ever the goal towards which our actual state of being strives; which it is the more perfect the nearer it can approach. Nor, in our actual world, where Labour must often prove *in*effectual, and thus in all senses Light alternate with Darkness, and the nature of an ideal Morality be much modified, is the case, thus far, materially different. It is a fact which escapes no one, that, generally speaking, whoso is acquainted with his worth has but a little stock to cultivate acquaintance with. Above all, the public acknowledgment of such acquaintance, indicating that it has reached quite an intimate footing, bodes ill. Already, to the popular judgment, he who talks much about Virtue in the abstract, begins to be suspect; it is shrewdly guessed that where there is great preaching, there will be little almsgiving. Or again, on a wider scale, we can remark that ages of Heroism are not ages of Moral Philosophy; Virtue, when it can be philosophized of, has become aware of itself, is sickly and beginning to decline. A spontaneous habitual all-pervading spirit of Chivalrous Valour shrinks together, and perks itself up into shrivelled Points of Honour; humane Courtesy and Nobleness of mind dwindle into punctilious Politeness, "avoiding meats;" "paying tithe of mint and anise, neglecting the weightier matters of the law." Goodness, which was a rule to itself, must now appeal to Precept, and seek strength from Sanctions; the Freewill no longer reigns unquestioned and by divine right, but like a mere earthly sovereign, by expediency, by Rewards and Punishments: or rather, let us say, the Freewill, so far as may be, has abdicated and withdrawn into the dark, and a spectral nightmare of a Necessity usurps its throne; for now that mysterious Self-impulse of the whole man, heaven-inspired, and in all senses partaking of the Infinite, being

captiously questioned in a finite dialect, and answering, as it needs must, by silence,—is conceived as non-extant, and only the outward Mechanism of it remains acknowledged : of Volition, except as the synonym of Desire, we hear nothing ; of " Motives," without any Mover, more than enough.

So too, when the generous Affections have become well-nigh paralytic, we have the reign of Sentimentality. The greatness, the profitableness, at any rate the extremely ornamental nature of high feeling, and the luxury of doing good ; charity, love, self-forgetfulness, devotedness and all manner of godlike magnanimity,—are everywhere insisted on, and pressingly inculcated in speech and writing, in prose and verse ; Socinian Preachers proclaim " Benevolence " to all the four winds, and have TRUTH engraved on their watch-seals : unhappily with little or no effect. Were the limbs in right walking order, why so much demonstrating of motion ? The barrenest of all mortals is the Sentimentalist. Granting even that he were sincere, and did not wilfully deceive us, or without first deceiving himself, what good is in him ? Does he not lie there as a perpetual lesson of despair, and type of bedrid valetudinarian impotence ? His is emphatically a Virtue that has become, through every fibre, conscious of itself ; it is all sick, and feels as if it were made of glass, and durst not touch or be touched ; in the shape of work, it can do nothing ; at the utmost, by incessant nursing and caudling, keep itself alive. As the last stage of all, when Virtue, properly so called, has ceased to be practised, and become extinct, and a mere remembrance, we have the era of Sophists, descanting of its existence, proving it, denying it, mechanically " accounting " for it ;—as dissectors and demonstrators cannot operate till once the body be dead.

Thus is true Moral genius, like true Intellectual, which indeed is but a lower phasis thereof, " ever a secret to itself." The healthy moral nature loves Goodness, and without wonder wholly lives in it : the unhealthy makes love to it, and would fain get to live in it ; or, finding such courtship fruitless, turns round, and not without contempt abandons it. These curious relations of the Voluntary and Conscious to the Involuntary and Unconscious, and the small proportion which, in all departments of our life, the former bears to the latter,—might lead us into deep questions of Psychology and Physiology : such, however, belong not to our present object. Enough, if the fact itself become apparent,

that Nature so meant it with us; that in this wise we are made. We may now say, that view man's individual Existence under what aspect we will, under the highest spiritual, as under the merely animal aspect, everywhere the grand vital energy, while in its sound state, is an unseen unconscious one; or, in the words of our old Aphorism, "the healthy know not of their health, but only the sick."

To understand man, however, we must look beyond the individual man and his actions or interests, and view him in combination with his fellows. It is in Society that man first feels what he is; first becomes what he can be. In Society an altogether new set of spiritual activities are evolved in him, and the old immeasurably quickened and strengthened. Society is the genial element wherein his nature first lives and grows; the solitary man were but a small portion of himself, and must continue forever folded in, stunted and only half alive. "Already," says a deep Thinker, with more meaning than will disclose itself at once, "my opinion, my conviction, gains *infinitely* in strength and sureness, the moment a second mind has adopted it." Such, even in its simplest form, is association; so wondrous the communion of soul with soul as directed to the mere act of Knowing! In other higher acts, the wonder is still more manifest; as in that portion of our being which we name the Moral: for properly, indeed, all communion is of a moral sort, whereof such intellectual communion (in the act of knowing) is itself an example. But with regard to Morals strictly so called, it is in Society, we might almost say, that Morality begins; here at least it takes an altogether new form, and on every side, as in living growth, expands itself. The Duties of Man to himself, to what is Highest in himself, make but the First Table of the Law: to the First Table is now superadded a Second, with the Duties of Man to his Neighbour; whereby also the significance of the First now assumes its true importance. Man has joined himself with man; soul acts and reacts on soul; a mystic miraculous unfathomable Union establishes itself; Life, in all its elements, has become intensated, consecrated. The lightning-spark of Thought, generated, or say rather heaven-kindled, in the solitary mind, awakens its express likeness in another mind, in a thousand other minds, and all blaze-up together in combined fire; reverberated from mind to mind, fed also with fresh fuel in each, it acquires incalculable new light as

Thought, incalculable new heat as converted into action. By and by, a common store of Thought can accumulate, and be transmitted as an everlasting possession; Literature, whether as preserved in the memory of Bards, in Runes and Hieroglyphs engraved on stone, or in Books of written or printed paper, comes into existence, and begins to play its wondrous part. Polities are formed; the weak submitting to the strong; with a willing loyalty, giving obedience that he may receive guidance: or say rather, in honour of our nature, the ignorant submitting to the wise; for so it is in all even the rudest communities, man never yields himself wholly to brute Force, but always to moral Greatness; thus the universal title of respect, from the Oriental *Sheik*, from the *Sachem* of the Red Indians, down to our English *Sir*, implies only that he whom we mean to honour is our *senior*. Last, as the crown and all-supporting keystone of the fabric, Religion arises. The devout meditation of the isolated man, which flitted through his soul, like a transient tone of Love and Awe from unknown lands, acquires certainty, continuance, when it is shared-in by his brother men. "Where two or three are gathered together" in the name of the Highest, then first does the Highest, as it is written, "appear among them to bless them;" then first does an Altar and act of united Worship open a way from Earth to Heaven; whereon, were it but a simple Jacob's-ladder, the heavenly Messengers will travel, with glad tidings and unspeakable gifts for men. Such is SOCIETY, the vital articulation of many individuals into a new collective individual: greatly the most important of man's attainments on this earth; that in which, and by virtue of which, all his other attainments and attempts find their arena, and have their value. Considered well, Society is the standing wonder of our existence; a true region of the Supernatural; as it were, a second all-embracing Life, wherein our first individual Life becomes doubly and trebly alive, and whatever of Infinitude was in us bodies itself forth, and becomes visible and active.

To figure Society as endowed with life is scarcely a metaphor; but rather the statement of a fact by such imperfect methods as language affords. Look at it closely, that mystic Union, Nature's highest work with man, wherein man's volition plays an indispensable yet so subordinate a part, and the small Mechanical grows so mysteriously and indissolubly out of the infinite Dynamical, like Body out of Spirit,—is truly enough vital, what we can call vital, and

bears the distinguishing character of life. In the same style also, we can say that Society has its periods of sickness and vigour, of youth, manhood, decrepitude, dissolution and new birth; in one or other of which stages we may, in all times, and all places where men inhabit, discern it; and do ourselves, in this time and place, whether as coöperating or as contending, as healthy members or as diseased ones, to our joy and sorrow, form part of it. The question, What is the actual condition of Society? has in these days unhappily become important enough. No one of us is unconcerned in that question; but for the majority of thinking men a true answer to it, such is the state of matters, appears almost as the one thing needful. Meanwhile, as the true answer, that is to say, the complete and fundamental answer and settlement, often as it has been demanded, is nowhere forthcoming, and indeed by its nature is impossible, any honest approximation towards such is not without value. The feeblest light, or even so much as a more precise recognition of the darkness, which is the first step to attainment of light, will be welcome.

This once understood, let it not seem idle if we remark that here too our old Aphorism holds; that again in the Body Politic, as in the animal body, the sign of right performance is Unconsciousness. Such indeed is virtually the meaning of that phrase, "artificial state of society," as contrasted with the natural state, and indicating something so inferior to it. For, in all vital things, men distinguish an Artificial and a Natural; founding on some dim perception or sentiment of the very truth we here insist on: the artificial is the conscious, mechanical; the natural is the unconscious, dynamical. Thus, as we have an artificial Poetry, and prize only the natural; so likewise we have an artificial Morality, an artificial Wisdom, an artificial Society. The artificial Society is precisely one that knows its own structure, its own internal functions; not in watching, not in knowing which, but in working outwardly to the fulfilment of its aim, does the wellbeing of a Society consist. Every Society, every Polity, has a spiritual principle; is the embodiment, tentative and more or less complete, of an Idea: all its tendencies of endeavour, specialties of custom, its laws, politics and whole procedure (as the glance of some Montesquieu, across innumerable superficial entanglements, can partly decipher), are prescribed by an Idea, and flow naturally from it, as movements from the living source of motion. This

Idea, be it of devotion to a man or class of men, to a creed, to an institution, or even, as in more ancient times, to a piece of land, is ever a true Loyalty; has in it something of a religious, paramount, quite infinite character; it is properly the Soul of the State, its Life; mysterious as other forms of Life, and like these working secretly, and in a depth beyond that of consciousness.

Accordingly, it is not in the vigorous ages of a Roman Republic that Treatises of the Commonwealth are written: while the Decii are rushing with devoted bodies on the enemies of Rome, what need of preaching Patriotism? The virtue of Patriotism has already sunk from its pristine all-transcendent condition, before it has received a name. So long as the Commonwealth continues rightly athletic, it cares not to dabble in anatomy. Why teach obedience to the Sovereign; why so much as admire it, or separately recognize it, while a divine idea of Obedience perennially inspires all men? Loyalty, like Patriotism, of which it is a form, was not praised till it had begun to decline; the *Preux Chevaliers* first became rightly admirable, when "dying for their king" had ceased to be a habit with chevaliers. For if the mystic significance of the State, let this be what it may, dwells vitally in every heart, encircles every life as with a second higher life, how should it stand self-questioning? It must rush outward, and express itself by works. Besides, if perfect, it is there as by necessity, and does not excite inquiry: it is also by nature infinite, has no limits; therefore can be circumscribed by no conditions and definitions; cannot be reasoned of; except *musically*, or in the language of Poetry, cannot yet so much as be spoken of.

In those days, Society was what we name healthy, sound at heart. Not indeed without suffering enough; not without perplexities, difficulty on every side: for such is the appointment of man; his highest and sole blessedness is, that he toil, and know what to toil at: not in ease, but in united victorious labour, which is at once evil and the victory over evil, does his Freedom lie. Nay often, looking no deeper than such superficial perplexities of the early Time, historians have taught us that it was all one mass of contradiction and disease; and in the antique Republic or feudal Monarchy have seen only the confused chaotic quarry, not the robust labourer, or the stately edifice he was building of it.

If Society, in such ages, had its difficulty, it had also its

strength; if sorrowful masses of rubbish so encumbered it, the tough sinews to hurl them aside, with indomitable heart, were not wanting. Society went along without complaint; did not stop to scrutinize itself, to say, How well I perform! or, Alas, how ill! Men did not yet feel themselves to be "the envy of surrounding nations;" and were enviable on that very account. Society was what we can call *whole*, in both senses of the word. The individual man was in himself a whole, or complete union; and could combine with his fellows as the living member of a greater whole. For all men, through their life, were animated by one great Idea; thus all efforts pointed one way, everywhere there was *wholeness*. Opinion and Action had not yet become disunited; but the former could still produce the latter, or attempt to produce it; as the stamp does its impression while the wax is not hardened. Thought and the voice of thought were also a unison; thus, instead of Speculation, we had Poetry; Literature, in its rude utterance, was as yet a heroic Song, perhaps too a devotional Anthem.

Religion was everywhere; Philosophy lay hid under it, peaceably included in it. Herein, as in the life-centre of all, lay the true health and oneness. Only at a later era must Religion split itself into Philosophies; and thereby, the vital union of Thought being lost, disunion and mutual collision in all provinces of Speech and Action more and more prevail. For if the Poet, or Priest, or by whatever title the inspired thinker may be named, is the sign of vigour and wellbeing; so likewise is the Logician, or uninspired thinker, the sign of disease, probably of decrepitude and decay. Thus, not to mention other instances, one of them much nearer hand,—so soon as Prophecy among the Hebrews had ceased, then did the reign of Argumentation begin; and the ancient Theocracy, in its Sadduceeisms and Phariseeisms, and vain jangling of sects and doctors, give token that the *soul* of it had fled, and that the *body* itself, by natural dissolution, "with the old forces still at work, but working in reverse order," was on the road to final disappearance.

We might pursue this question into innumerable other ramifications; and everywhere, under new shapes, find the same truth, which we here so imperfectly enunciate, disclosed; that throughout the whole world of man, in all manifestations and performances of his nature, outward and inward, personal and social, the Perfect, the Great is a

mystery to itself, knows not itself; whatsoever does know itself is already little, and more or less imperfect. Or otherwise, we may say, Unconsciousness belongs to pure unmixed life; Consciousness to a diseased mixture and conflict of life and death: Unconsciousness is the sign of creation; Consciousness, at best, that of manufacture. So deep, in this existence of ours, is the significance of Mystery. Well might the Ancients make Silence a god; for it is the element of all godhood, infinitude, or transcendental greatness; at once the source and the ocean wherein all such begins and ends. In the same sense, too, have Poets sung "Hymns to the Night;" as if Night were nobler than Day; as if Day were but a small motley-coloured veil spread transiently over the infinite bosom of Night, and did but deform and hide from us its purely transparent eternal deeps. So likewise have they spoken and sung as if Silence were the grand epitome and complete sum-total of all Harmony; and Death, what mortals call Death, properly the beginning of Life. Under such figures, since except in figures there is no speaking of the Invisible, have men endeavoured to express a great Truth;—a Truth, in our Times, as nearly as is perhaps possible, forgotten by the most; which nevertheless continues forever true, forever all-important, and will one day, under new figures, be again brought home to the bosoms of all.

But indeed, in a far lower sense, the rudest mind has still some intimation of the greatness there is in Mystery. If Silence was made a god of by the Ancients, he still continues a government-clerk among us Moderns. To all quacks, moreover, of what sort soever, the effect of Mystery is well known: here and there some Cagliostro, even in latter days, turns it to notable account: the blockhead also, who is ambitious, and has no talent, finds sometimes in "the talent of silence," a kind of succedaneum. Or again, looking on the opposite side of the matter, do we not see, in the common understanding of mankind, a certain distrust, a certain contempt of what is altogether self-conscious and mechanical? As nothing that is wholly seen through has other than a trivial character; so anything professing to be great, and yet wholly to see through itself, is already known to be false, and a failure. The evil repute your "theoretical men" stand in, the acknowledged inefficiency of "paper constitutions," and all that class of objects, are instances of this. Experience often

repeated, and perhaps a certain instinct of something far deeper that lies under such experiences, has taught men so much. They know beforehand, that the loud is generally the insignificant, the empty. Whatsoever can proclaim itself from the house-tops may be fit for the hawker, and for those multitudes that must needs buy of him; but for any deeper use, might as well continue unproclaimed. Observe too, how the converse of the proposition holds; how the insignificant, the empty, is usually the loud; and, after the manner of a drum, is loud even because of its emptiness. The uses of some Patent Dinner Calefactor can be bruited abroad over the whole world in the course of the first winter; those of the Printing Press are not so well seen into for the first three centuries: the passing of the Select-Vestries Bill raises more noise and hopeful expectancy among mankind than did the promulgation of the Christian Religion. Again, and again, we say, the great, the creative, and enduring is ever a secret to itself; only the small, the barren and transient is otherwise.

If we now, with a practical medical view, examine, by this same test of Unconsciousness, the Condition of our own Era, and of man's Life therein, the diagnosis we arrive at is nowise of a flattering sort. The state of Society in our days is, of all possible states, the least an unconscious one: this is specially the Era when all manner of Inquiries into what was once the unfelt, involuntary sphere of man's existence, find their place, and, as it were, occupy the whole domain of thought. What, for example, is all this that we hear, for the last generation or two, about the Improvement of the Age, the Spirit of the Age, Destruction of Prejudice, Progress of the Species, and the March of Intellect, but an unhealthy state of self-sentience, self-survey; the precursor and prognostic of still worse health? That Intellect do march, if possible at double-quick time, is very desirable; nevertheless, why should she turn round at every stride, and cry: See you what a stride I have taken! Such a marching of Intellect is distinctly of the spavined kind; what the Jockeys call "all action and no go." Or at best, if we examine well, it is the marching of that gouty Patient, whom his Doctors had clapt on a metal floor artificially heated to the searing point, so that he was obliged to march, and did march with a vengeance —nowhither. Intellect did not awaken for the first time

yesterday; but has been under way from Noah's Flood downwards: greatly her best progress, moreover, was in the old times, when she said nothing about it. In those same "dark ages," Intellect (metaphorically as well as literally) could invent *glass*, which now she has enough ado to grind into *spectacles*. Intellect built not only Churches, but a Church, *the* Church, based on this firm Earth, yet reaching up, and leading up, as high as Heaven; and now it is all she can do to keep its doors bolted, that there be no tearing of the Surplices, no robbery of the Alms-box. She built a Senate-house likewise, glorious in its kind; and now it costs her a well-nigh mortal effort to sweep it clear of vermin, and get the roof made rain-tight.

But the truth is, with Intellect, as with most other things, we are now passing from that first or boastful stage of Self-sentience into the second or painful one: out of these often-asseverated declarations that "our system is in high order," we come now, by natural sequence, to the melancholy conviction that it is altogether the reverse. Thus, for instance, in the matter of Government, the period of the "Invaluable Constitution" has to be followed by a Reform Bill; to laudatory De Lolmes succeed objurgatory Benthams. At any rate, what Treatises on the Social Contract, on the Elective Franchise, the Rights of Man, the Rights of Property, Codifications, Institutions, Constitutions, have we not, for long years, groaned under! Or again, with a wider survey, consider those Essays on Man, Thoughts on Man, Inquiries concerning Man; not to mention Evidences of the Christian Faith, Theories of Poetry, Considerations on the Origin of Evil, which during the last century have accumulated on us to a frightful extent. Never since the beginning of Time was there, that we hear or read of, so intensely self-conscious a Society. Our whole relations to the Universe and to our fellow-man have become an Inquiry, a Doubt; nothing will go on of its own accord, and do its function quietly; but all things must be probed into, the whole working of man's world be anatomically studied. Alas, anatomically studied, that it may be medically aided! Till at length indeed, we have come to such a pass, that except in this same *medicine*, with its artifices and appliances, few can so much as imagine any strength or hope to remain for us. The whole Life of Society must now be carried on by drugs: doctor after doctor appears with his nostrum, of

Coöperative Societies, Universal Suffrage, Cottage-and-Cow systems, Repression of Population, Vote by Ballot. To such height has the dyspepsia of Society reached; as indeed the constant grinding internal pain, or from time to time the mad spasmodic throes, of all Society do otherwise too mournfully indicate.

Far be it from us to attribute, as some unwise persons do, the disease itself to this unhappy sensation that there is a disease! The Encyclopedists did not produce the troubles of France; but the troubles of France produced the Encyclopedists, and much else. The Self-consciousness is the symptom merely; nay, it is also the attempt towards cure. We record the fact, without special censure; not wondering that Society should feel itself, and in all ways complain of aches and twinges, for it has suffered enough. Napoleon was but a Job's-comforter, when he told his wounded Staff-officer, twice unhorsed by cannon-balls, and with half his limbs blown to pieces: "*Vous vous écoutez trop!*"

On the outward, as it were Physical diseases of Society, it were beside our purpose to insist here. These are diseases which he who runs may read; and sorrow over, with or without hope. Wealth has accumulated itself into masses; and Poverty, also in accumulation enough, lies impassably separated from it; opposed, uncommunicating, like forces in positive and negative poles. The gods of this lower world sit aloft on glittering thrones, less happy than Epicurus's gods, but as indolent, as impotent; while the boundless living chaos of Ignorance and Hunger welters terrific, in its dark fury, under their feet. How much among us might be likened to a whited sepulchre; outwardly all pomp and strength; but inwardly full of horror and despair and dead-men's bones! Iron highways, with their wains fire-winged, are uniting all ends of the firm Land; quays and moles, with their innumerable stately fleets, tame the Ocean into our pliant bearer of burdens; Labour's thousand arms, of sinew and of metal, all-conquering everywhere, from the tops of the mountain down to the depths of the mine and caverns of the sea, ply unweariedly for the service of man: yet man remains unserved. He has subdued this Planet, his habitation and inheritance; yet reaps no profit from the victory.

Sad to look upon: in the highest stage of civilization, nine tenths of mankind have to struggle in the lowest

battle of savage or even animal man, the battle against Famine. Countries are rich, prosperous in all manner of increase, beyond example: but the Men of those countries are poor, needier than ever of all sustenance outward and inward; of Belief, of Knowledge, of Money, of Food. The rule, *Sic vos non vobis*, never altogether to be got rid of in men's Industry, now presses with such incubus weight, that Industry must shake it off, or utterly be strangled under it; and, alas, can as yet but gasp and rave, and aimlessly struggle, like one in the final deliration. Thus Change, or the inevitable approach of Change, is manifest everywhere. In one Country we have seen lava-torrents of fever-frenzy envelop all things; Government succeed Government, like the phantasms of a dying brain. In another Country, we can even now see, in maddest alternation, the Peasant governed by such guidance as this: To labour earnestly one month in raising wheat, and the next month labour earnestly in burning it. So that Society, were it not by nature immortal, and its death ever a new-birth, might appear, as it does in the eyes of some, to be sick to dissolution, and even now writhing in its last agony. Sick enough we must admit it to be, with disease enough, a whole nosology of diseases; wherein he perhaps is happiest that is not called to prescribe as physician;—wherein, however, one small piece of policy, that of summoning the Wisest in the Commonwealth, by the sole method yet known or thought of, to come together and with their whole soul consult for it, might, but for late tedious experiences, have seemed unquestionable enough.

But leaving this, let us rather look within, into the Spiritual condition of Society, and see what aspects and prospects offer themselves there. For after all, it is there properly that the secret and origin of the whole is to be sought: the Physical derangements of Society are but the image and impress of its Spiritual; while the heart continues sound, all other sickness is superficial, and temporary. False Action is the fruit of false Speculation; let the spirit of Society be free and strong, that is to say, let true Principles inspire the members of Society, then neither can disorders accumulate in its Practice; each disorder will be promptly, faithfully inquired into, and remedied as it arises. But alas, with us the Spiritual condition of Society is no less sickly than the Physical. Examine man's internal world, in any of its social relations and

performances, here too all seems diseased self-consciousness, collision and mutually-destructive struggle. Nothing acts from within outwards in undivided healthy force; everything lies impotent, lamed, its force turned inwards, and painfully "listens to itself."

To begin with our highest Spiritual function, with Religion, we might ask, Whither has Religion now fled? Of Churches and their establishments we here say nothing; nor of the unhappy domains of Unbelief, and how innumerable men, blinded in their minds, have grown to "live without God in the world;" but, taking the fairest side of the matter, we ask, What is the nature of that same Religion, which still lingers in the hearts of the few who are called, and call themselves, specially the Religious? Is it a healthy religion, vital, unconscious of itself; that shines forth spontaneously in doing of the Work, or even in preaching of the Word? Unhappily, no. Instead of heroic martyr Conduct, and inspired and soul-inspiring Eloquence, whereby Religion itself were brought home to our living bosoms, to live and reign there, we have "Discourses on the Evidences," endeavouring, with smallest result, to make it probable that such a thing as Religion exists. The most enthusiastic Evangelicals do not preach a Gospel, but keep describing how it should and might be preached: to awaken the sacred fire of faith, as by a sacred contagion, is not their endeavour; but, at most, to describe how Faith shows and acts, and scientifically distinguish true Faith from false. Religion, like all else, is conscious of itself, listens to itself; it becomes less and less creative, vital: more and more mechanical. Considered as a whole, the Christian Religion of late ages has been continually dissipating itself into Metaphysics; and threatens now to disappear, as some rivers do, in deserts of barren sand.

Of Literature, and its deep-seated, wide-spread maladies, why speak? Literature is but a branch of Religion, and always participates in its character: however, in our time, it is the only branch that still shows any greenness; and, as some think, must one day become the main stem. Now, apart from the subterranean and tartarean regions of Literature;—leaving out of view the frightful, scandalous statistics of Puffing, the mystery of Slander, Falsehood, Hatred and other convulsion-work of rabid Imbecility, and all that has rendered Literature on that side a perfect

"Babylon the mother of Abominations," in very deed making the world "drunk" with the wine of her iniquity; —forgetting all this, let us look only to the regions of the upper air; to such Literature as can be said to have some attempt towards truth in it, some tone of music, and if it be not poetical, to hold of the poetical. Among other characteristics, is not this manifest enough: that it knows itself? Spontaneous devotedness to the object, being wholly possessed by the object, what we can call Inspiration, has well-nigh ceased to appear in Literature. Which melodious Singer forgets that he is singing melodiously? We have not the love of greatness, but the love of the love of greatness. Hence infinite Affectations, Distractions; in every case inevitable Error. Consider, for one example, this peculiarity of Modern Literature, the sin that has been named View-Hunting. In our elder writers, there are no paintings of scenery for its own sake; no euphuistic gallantries with Nature, but a constant heartlove for her, a constant dwelling in communion with her. View-hunting, with so much else that is of kin to it, first came decisively into action through the *Sorrows of Werter*; which wonderful Performance, indeed, may in many senses be regarded as the progenitor of all that has since become popular in Literature; whereof, in so far as concerns spirit and tendency, it still offers the most instructive image; for nowhere, except in its own country, above all in the mind of its illustrious Author, has it yet fallen wholly obsolete. Scarcely ever, till that late epoch, did any worshipper of Nature become entirely aware that he was worshipping, much to his own credit; and think of saying to himself: Come, let us make a description! Intolerable enough: when every puny whipster plucks out his pencil, and insists on painting you a scene; so that the instant you discern such a thing as "wavy outline," "mirror of the lake," "stern headland," or the like, in any Book, you tremulously hasten on; and scarcely the Author of Waverley himself can tempt you not to skip.

Nay, is not the diseased self-conscious state of Literature disclosed in this one fact, which lies so near us here, the prevalence of Reviewing! Sterne's wish for a reader "that would give-up the reins of his imagination into his author's hands, and be pleased he knew not why, and cared not wherefore," might lead him a long journey now. Indeed, for our best class of readers, the chief pleasure, a very

stinted one, is this same knowing of the Why; which many a Kames and Bossu has been, ineffectually enough, endeavouring to teach us: till at last these also have laid down their trade; and now your Reviewer is a mere *taster*; who tastes, and says, by the evidence of such palate, such tongue, as he has got, It is good, It is bad. Was it thus that the French carried out certain inferior creatures on their Algerine Expedition, to taste the wells for them, and try whether they were poisoned? Far be it from us to disparage our own craft, whereby we have our living! Only we must note these things: that Reviewing spreads with strange vigour; that such a man as Byron reckons the Reviewer and the Poet equal; that at the last Leipzig Fair, there was advertised a Review of Reviews. By and by it will be found that all Literature has become one boundless self-devouring Review; and, as in London routs, we have to *do* nothing, but only to *see* others do nothing.—Thus does Literature also, like a sick thing, superabundantly "listen to itself."

No less is this unhealthy symptom manifest, if we cast a glance on our Philosophy, on the character of our speculative Thinking. Nay already, as above hinted, the mere existence and necessity of a Philosophy is an evil. Man is sent hither not to question, but to work: "the end of man," it was long ago written, "is an Action, not a Thought." In the perfect state, all Thought were but the picture and inspiring symbol of Action; Philosophy, except as Poetry and Religion, would have no being. And yet how, in this imperfect state, can it be avoided, can it be dispensed with? Man stands as in the centre of Nature; his fraction of Time encircled by Eternity, his handbreadth of Space encircled by Infinitude: how shall he forbear asking himself, What am I; and Whence; and Whither? How too, except in slight partial hints, in kind asseverations and assurances, such as a mother quiets her fretfully inquisitive child with, shall he get answer to such inquiries?

The disease of Metaphysics, accordingly, is a perennial one. In all ages, those questions of Death and Immortality, Origin of Evil, Freedom and Necessity, must, under new forms, anew make their appearance; ever, from time to time, must the attempt to shape for ourselves some Theorem of the Universe be repeated. And ever unsuccessfully: for what Theorem of the Infinite can the Finite render complete? We, the whole species of Mankind, and

our whole existence and history, are but a floating speck in the illimitable ocean of the All; yet *in* that ocean; indissoluble portion thereof; partaking of its infinite tendencies: borne this way and that by its deep-swelling tides, and grand ocean currents;—of which what faintest chance is there that we should ever exhaust the significance, ascertain the goings and comings? A region of Doubt, therefore, hovers forever in the background; in Action alone can we have certainty. Nay properly Doubt is the indispensable inexhaustible material whereon Action works, which Action has to fashion into Certainty and Reality; only on a canvas of Darkness, such is man's way of being, could the many-coloured picture of our Life paint itself and shine.

Thus if our eldest system of Metaphysics is as old as the *Book of Genesis*, our latest is that of Mr. Thomas Hope, published only within the current year. It is a chronic malady that of Metaphysics, as we said, and perpetually recurs on us. At the utmost, there is a better and worse in it; a stage of convalescence, and a stage of relapse with new sickness: these forever succeed each other, as is the nature of all Life-movement here below. The first, or convalescent stage, we might also name that of Dogmatical or Constructive Metaphysics; when the mind constructively endeavours to scheme out and assert for itself an actual Theorem of the Universe, and therewith for a time rests satisfied. The second or sick stage might be called that of Sceptical or Inquisitory Metaphysics; when the mind having widened its sphere of vision, the existing Theorem of the Universe no longer answers the phenomena, no longer yields contentment; but must be torn in pieces, and certainly anew sought for in the endless realms of denial. All Theologies and sacred Cosmogonies belong, in some measure, to the first class; in all Pyrrhonism, from Pyrrho down to Hume and the innumerable disciples of Hume, we have instances enough of the second. In the former, so far as it affords satisfaction, a temporary anodyne to doubt, an arena for wholesome action, there may be much good; indeed in this case, it holds rather of Poetry than of Metaphysics, might be called Inspiration rather than Speculation. The latter is Metaphysics proper; a pure, unmixed, though from time to time a necessary evil.

For truly, if we look into it, there is no more fruitless endeavour than this same, which the Metaphysician proper

toils in: to educe Conviction out of Negation. How, by merely testing and rejecting what is not, shall we ever attain knowledge of what is? Metaphysical Speculation, as it begins in No or Nothingness, so it must needs end in Nothingness; circulates and must circulate in endless vortices; creating, swallowing—itself. Our being is made up of Light and Darkness, the Light resting on the Darkness, and balancing it; everywhere there is Dualism, Equipoise; a perpetual Contradiction dwells in us: "where shall I place myself to escape from my own shadow?" Consider it well, Metaphysics is the attempt of the mind to rise above the mind; to environ and shut in, or as we say, *comprehend* the mind. Hopeless struggle, for the wisest, as for the foolishest! What strength of sinew, or athletic skill, will enable the stoutest athlete to fold his own body in his arms, and, by lifting, lift up *himself*? The Irish Saint swam the Channel, "carrying his head in his teeth;" but the feat has never been imitated.

That this is the age of Metaphysics, in the proper, or sceptical Inquisitory sense; that there was a necessity for its being such an age, we regard as our indubitable misfortune. From many causes, the arena of free Activity has long been narrowing, that of sceptical Inquiry becoming more and more universal, more and more perplexing. The Thought conducts not to the Deed; but in boundless chaos, self-devouring, engenders monstrosities, phantasms, fire-breathing chimeras. Profitable Speculation were this: What is to be done; and How is it to be done? But with us not so much as the What can be got sight of. For some generations, all Philosophy has been a painful, captious, hostile question towards everything in the Heaven above, and in the Earth beneath: Why art thou there? Till at length it has come to pass that the worth and authenticity of all things seems dubitable or deniable: our best effort must be unproductively spent not in working, but in ascertaining our mere Whereabout, and so much as whether we are to work at all. Doubt, which, as was said, ever hangs in the background of our world, has now become our middleground and foreground; whereon, for the time, no fair Life-picture can be painted, but only the dark air-canvas itself flow round us, bewildering and benighting.

Nevertheless, doubt as we will, man is actually Here; not to ask questions, but to do work: in this time, as in

all times, it must be the heaviest evil for him, if his faculty of Action lie dormant, and only that of sceptical Inquiry exert itself. Accordingly, whoever looks abroad upon the world, comparing the Past with the Present, may find that the practical condition of man in these days is one of the saddest; burdened with miseries which are in a considerable degree peculiar. In no time was man's life what he calls a happy one; in no time can it be so. A perpetual dream there has been of Paradises, and some luxurious Lubberland, where the brooks should run wine, and the trees bend with ready-baked viands; but it was a dream merely; an impossible dream. Suffering, contradiction, error, have their quite perennial, and even indispensable abode in this Earth. Is not labour the inheritance of man? And what labour for the present is joyous, and not grievous? Labour, effort, is the very interruption of that ease, which man foolishly enough fancies to be his happiness; and yet without labour there were no ease, no rest, so much as conceivable. Thus Evil, what we call Evil, must ever exist while man exists: Evil, in the widest sense we can give it, is precisely the dark, disordered material out of which man's Freewill has to create an edifice of order and Good. Ever must Pain urge us to Labour; and only in free Effort can any blessedness be imagined for us.

But if man has, in all ages, had enough to encounter, there has, in most civilized ages, been an inward force vouchsafed him, whereby the pressure of things outward might be withstood. Obstruction abounded; but Faith also was not wanting. It is by Faith that man removes mountains: while he had Faith, his limbs might be wearied with toiling, his back galled with bearing; but the heart within him was peaceable and resolved. In the thickest gloom there burnt a lamp to guide him. If he struggled and suffered, he felt that it even should be so; knew for what he was suffering and struggling. Faith gave him an inward Willingness; a world of Strength wherewith to front a world of Difficulty. The true wretchedness lies here: that the Difficulty remain and the Strength be lost; that Pain cannot relieve itself in free Effort; that we have the Labour, and want the Willingness. Faith strengthens us, enlightens us, for all endeavours and endurances; with Faith we can do all, and dare all, and life itself has a thousand times been joyfully given away. But the sum of man's misery is even this, that he feel him-

self crushed under the Juggernaut wheels, and know that Juggernaut is no divinity, but a dead mechanical idol.

Now this is specially the misery which has fallen on man in our Era. Belief, Faith has well-nigh vanished from the world. The youth on awakening in this wondrous Universe no longer finds a competent theory of its wonders. Time was, when if he asked himself, What is man, What are the duties of man? the answer stood ready written for him. But now the ancient "ground-plan of the All" belies itself when brought into contact with reality; Mother Church has, to the most, become a superannuated Step-mother, whose lessons go disregarded; or are spurned at, and scornfully gainsaid. For young Valour and thirst of Action no ideal Chivalry invites to heroism, prescribes what is heroic: the old ideal of Manhood has grown obsolete, and the new is still invisible to us, and we grope after it in darkness, one clutching this phantom, another that; Werterism, Byronism, even Brummelism, each has its day. For Contemplation and love of Wisdom, no Cloister now opens its religious shades; the Thinker must, in all senses, wander homeless, too often aimless, looking up to a Heaven which is dead for him, round to an Earth which is deaf. Action, in those old days, was easy, was voluntary, for the divine worth of human things lay acknowledged; Speculation was wholesome, for it ranged itself as the handmaid of Action; what could not so range itself died out by its natural death, by neglect. Loyalty still hallowed obedience, and made rule noble; there was still something to be loyal to: the Godlike stood embodied under many a symbol in men's interests and business; the Finite shadowed forth the Infinite; Eternity looked through Time. The Life of man was encompassed and overcanopied by a glory of Heaven, even as his dwelling-place by the azure vault.

How changed in these new days! Truly may it be said, the Divinity has withdrawn from the Earth; or veils himself in that wide-wasting Whirlwind of a departing Era, wherein the fewest can discern his goings. Not Godhead, but an iron, ignoble circle of Necessity embraces all things; binds the youth of these times into a sluggish thrall, or else exasperates him into a rebel. Heroic Action is paralysed; for what worth now remains unquestionable with him? At the fervid period when his whole nature cries aloud for Action, there is nothing sacred under whose banner he can act; the course and kind and conditions of free Action are

all but undiscoverable. Doubt storms-in on him through every avenue; inquiries of the deepest, painfulest sort must be engaged with; and the invincible energy of young years waste itself in sceptical, suicidal cavillings; in passionate "questionings of Destiny," whereto no answer will be returned.

For men, in whom the old perennial principle of Hunger (be it Hunger of the poor Day-drudge who stills it with eighteenpence a-day, or of the ambitious Placehunter who can nowise still it with so little) suffices to fill-up existence, the case is bad; but not the worst. These men have an aim, such as it is; and can steer towards it, with chagrin enough truly; yet, as their hands are kept full, without desperation. Unhappier are they to whom a higher instinct has been given; who struggle to be persons, not machines; to whom the Universe is not a warehouse, or at best a fancy-bazaar, but a mystic temple and hall of doom. For such men there lie properly two courses open. The lower, yet still an estimable class, take up with worn-out Symbols of the Godlike; keep trimming and trucking between these and Hypocrisy, purblindly enough, miserably enough. A numerous intermediate class end in Denial; and form a theory that there is no theory; that nothing is certain in the world, except this fact of Pleasure being pleasant; so they try to realize what trifling modicum of Pleasure they can come at, and to live contented therewith, winking hard. Of these we speak not here; but only of the second nobler class, who also have dared to say No and cannot yet say Yea; but feel that in the No they dwell as in a Golgotha, where life enters not, where peace is not appointed them.

Hard, for most part, is the fate of such men; the harder the nobler they are. In dim forecastings, wrestles within them the "Divine Idea of the World," yet will nowhere visibly reveal itself. They have to realize a Worship for themselves, or live unworshipping. The Godlike has vanished from the world; and they, by the strong cry of their soul's agony, like true wonder-workers, must again evoke its presence. This miracle is their appointed task; which they must accomplish, or die wretchedly: this miracle has been accomplished by such; but not in our land; our land yet knows not of it. Behold a Byron, in melodious tones, "cursing his day:" he mistakes earthborn passionate Desire for heaven-inspired Freewill; without heavenly load-star, rushes madly into the dance of meteoric lights that

hover on the mad Mahlstrom; and goes down among its eddies. Hear a Shelley filling the earth with inarticulate wail; like the infinite, inarticulate grief and weeping of forsaken infants. A noble Friedrich Schlegel, stupefied in that fearful loneliness, as of a silenced battle-field, flies back to Catholicism; as a child might to its slain mother's bosom, and cling there. In lower regions, how many a poor Hazlitt must wander on God's verdant earth, like the Unblest on burning deserts; passionately dig wells, and draw up only the dry quicksand; believe that he is seeking Truth, yet only wrestle among endless Sophisms, doing desperate battle as with spectre-hosts; and die and make no sign!

To the better order of such minds any mad joy of Denial has long since ceased: the problem is not now to deny, but to ascertain and perform. Once in destroying the False, there was a certain inspiration; but now the genius of Destruction has done its work, there is now nothing more to destroy. The doom of the Old has long been pronounced, and irrevocable; the Old has passed away: but, alas, the New appears not in its stead; the Time is still in pangs of travail with the New. Man has walked by the light of conflagrations, and amid the sound of falling cities; and now there is darkness, and long watching till it be morning. The voice even of the faithful can but exclaim: "As yet struggles the twelfth hour of the Night: birds of darkness are on the wing, spectres uproar, the dead walk, the living dream.—Thou, Eternal Providence, wilt cause the day to dawn!" *

Such being the condition, temporal and spiritual, of the world at our Epoch, can we wonder that the world "listens to itself," and struggles and writhes, everywhere externally and internally, like a thing in pain? Nay, is not even this unhealthy action of the world's Organization, if the symptom of universal disease, yet also the symptom and sole means of restoration and cure? The effort of Nature, exerting her medicative force to cast-out foreign impediments, and once more become One, become whole? In Practice, still more in Opinion, which is the precursor and prototype of Practice, there must needs be collision, convulsion; much has to be ground away. Thought must needs be Doubt and Inquiry before it can again be Affirmation and Sacred Precept. Innumerable "Philosophies of

* Jean Paul's *Hesperus* (Vorrede).

Man," contending in boundless hubbub, must annihilate each other, before an inspired Poesy and Faith for Man can fashion itself together.

From this stunning hubbub, a true Babel-like confusion of tongues, we have here selected two Voices ; less as objects of praise or condemnation, than as signs how far the confusion has reached, what prospect there is of its abating. Friedrich Schlegel's *Lectures* delivered at Dresden, and Mr. Hope's *Essay* published in London, are the latest utterances of European Speculation : far asunder in external place, they stand at a still wider distance in inward purport ; are, indeed, so opposite and yet so cognate that they may, in many senses, represent the two Extremes of our whole modern system of Thought ; and be said to include between them all the Metaphysical Philosophies, so often alluded to here, which, of late times, from France, Germany, England, have agitated and almost overwhelmed us. Both in regard to matter and to form, the relation of these two Works is significant enough.

Speaking first of their cognate qualities, let us remark, not without emotion, one quite extraneous point of agreement ; the fact that the Writers of both have departed from this world ; they have now finished their search, and had all doubts resolved : while we listen to the voice, the tongue that uttered it has gone silent forever. But the fundamental, all-pervading similarity lies in this circumstance, well worthy of being noted, that both these Philosophies are of the Dogmatic or Constructive sort : each in its way is a kind of Genesis ; an endeavour to bring the Phenomena of man's Universe once more under some theoretic Scheme : in both there is a decided principle of unity ; they strive after a result which shall be positive ; their aim is not to question but to establish. This, especially if we consider with what comprehensive concentrated force it is here exhibited, forms a new feature in such works.

Under all other aspects, there is the most irreconcilable opposition ; a staring contrariety, such as might provoke contrasts, were there far fewer points of comparison. If Schlegel's Work is the apotheosis of Spiritualism ; Hope's again is the apotheosis of Materialism : in the one, all Matter is evaporated into a Phenomenon, and terrestrial Life itself, with its whole doings and showings, held out as a Disturbance (*Zerrüttung*) produced by the *Zeitgeist* (Spirit of Time) ;

in the other, Matter is distilled and sublimated into some semblance of Divinity: the one regards Space and Time as mere forms of man's mind, and without external existence or reality; the other supposes Space and Time to be "incessantly created," and rayed-in upon us like a sort of "gravitation." Such is their difference in respect of purport: no less striking is it in respect of manner, talent, success and all outward characteristics. Thus, if in Schlegel we have to admire the power of Words, in Hope we stand astonished, it might almost be said, at the want of an articulate Language. To Schlegel his Philosophic Speech is obedient, dextrous, exact, like a promptly ministering genius; his names are so clear, so precise and vivid, that they almost (sometimes altogether) become things for him: with Hope there is no Philosophical Speech; but a painful, confused stammering, and struggling after such; or the tongue, as in doatish forgetfulness, maunders, low, long-winded, and speaks not the word intended, but another; so that here the scarcely intelligible, in these endless convolutions, becomes the wholly unreadable; and often we could ask, as that mad pupil did of his tutor in Philosophy, "But whether is Virtue a fluid, then, or a gas?" If the fact, that Schlegel, in the city of Dresden, could find audience for such high discourse, may excite our envy; this other fact, that a person of strong powers, skilled in English Thought and master of its Dialect, could write the *Origin and Prospects of Man*, may painfully remind us of the reproach, that England has now no language for Meditation; that England, the most calculative, is the least meditative, of all civilized countries.

It is not our purpose to offer any criticism of Schlegel's Book; in such limits as were possible here, we should despair of communicating even the faintest image of its significance. To the mass of readers, indeed, both among the Germans themselves, and still more elsewhere, it nowise addresses itself, and may lie for ever sealed. We point it out as a remarkable document of the Time and of the Man; can recommend it, moreover, to all earnest Thinkers, as a work deserving their best regard; a work full of deep meditation, wherein the infinite mystery of Life, if not represented, is decisively recognized. Of Schlegel himself, and his character, and spiritual history, we can profess no thorough or final understanding; yet enough to make us view him with admiration and pity, nowise with harsh con-

temptuous censure ; and must say, with clearest persuasion, that the outcry of his being " a renegade," and so forth, is but like other such outcries, a judgment where there was neither jury, nor evidence, nor judge. The candid reader, in this Book itself, to say nothing of all the rest, will find traces of a high, far-seeing, earnest spirit, to whom " Austrian Pensions," and the Kaiser's crown, and Austria altogether, were but a light matter to the finding and vitally appropriating of Truth. Let us respect the sacred mystery of a Person ; rush not irreverently into man's Holy of Holies ! Were the lost little one, as we said already, found " sucking its dead mother, on the field of carnage," could it be other than a spectacle for tears ? A solemn mournful feeling comes over us when we see this last Work of Friedrich Schlegel, the unwearied seeker, end abruptly in the middle ; and, as if he *had not* yet found, as if emblematically of much, end with an " *Aber*—," with a " But—" ! This was the last word that came from the Pen of Friedrich Schlegel : about eleven at night he wrote it down, and there paused sick ; at one in the morning, Time for him had merged itself in Eternity ; he was, as we say, no more.

Still less can we attempt any criticism of Mr. Hope's new Book of Genesis. Indeed, under any circumstances, criticism of it were now impossible. Such an utterance could only be responded to in peals of laughter ; and laughter sounds hollow and hideous through the vaults of the dead. Of this monstrous Anomaly, where all sciences are heaped and huddled together, and the principles of all are, with a childlike innocence, plied hither and thither, or wholly abolished in case of need ; where the First Cause is figured as a huge Circle, with nothing to do but radiate " gravitation " towards its centre ; and so construct a Universe, wherein all, from the lowest cucumber with its coolness up to the highest seraph with his love, were but " gravitation " direct or reflex, " in more or less central globes,"— what can we say, except, with sorrow and shame, that it could have originated nowhere save in England ? It is a general agglomerate of all facts, notions, whims and observations, as they lie in the brain of an English gentleman ; as an English gentleman, of unusual thinking power, is led to fashion them, in his schools and in his world : all these thrown into the crucible, and if not fused, yet soldered or conglutinated with boundless patience ; and now tumbled out here, heterogeneous, amorphous, unspeakable, a world's

wonder. Most melancholy must we name the whole business; full of long-continued thought, earnestness, loftiness of mind; not without glances into the Deepest, a constant fearless endeavour after truth; and with all this nothing accomplished, but the perhaps absurdest Book written in our century by a thinking man. A shameful Abortion; which, however, need not now be smothered or mangled, for it is already dead; only, in our love and sorrowing reverence for the writer of *Anastasius*, and the heroic seeker of Light, though not bringer thereof, let it be buried and forgotten.

For ourselves, the loud discord which jars in these two Works, in innumerable works of the like import, and generally in all the Thought and Action of this period, does not any longer utterly confuse us. Unhappy who, in such a time, felt not, at all conjunctures, ineradicably in his heart the knowledge that a God made this Universe, and a Demon not! And shall Evil always prosper, then? Out of all Evil comes Good; and no Good that is possible but shall one day be real. Deep and sad as is our feeling that we stand yet in the bodeful Night; equally deep, indestructible is our assurance that the Morning also will not fail. Nay already, as we look round, streaks of a dayspring are in the east; it is dawning; when the time shall be fulfilled, it will be day. The progress of man towards higher and nobler developments of whatever is highest and noblest in him, lies not only prophesied to Faith, but now written to the eye of Observation, so that he who runs may read.

One great step of progress, for example, we should say, in actual circumstances, was this same; the clear ascertainment that we are in progress. About the grand Course of Providence, and his final Purposes with us, we can know nothing, or almost nothing: man begins in darkness, ends in darkness; mystery is everywhere around us and in us, under our feet, among our hands. Nevertheless so much has become evident to every one, that this wondrous Mankind is advancing somewhither; that at least all human things are, have been and forever will be, in Movement and Change; —as, indeed, for beings that exist in Time, by virtue of Time, and are made of Time, might have been long since understood. In some provinces, it is true, as in Experimental Science, this discovery is an old one; but in most others it belongs wholly to these latter days. How often,

in former ages, by eternal Creeds, eternal Forms of Government and the like, has it been attempted, fiercely enough, and with destructive violence, to chain the Future under the Past ; and say to the Providence, whose ways with man are mysterious, and through the great deep : Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther ! A wholly insane attempt ; and for man himself, could it prosper, the frightfulest of all enchantments, a very Life-in-Death. Man's task here below, the destiny of every individual man, is to be in turns Apprentice and Workman ; or say rather, Scholar, Teacher, Discoverer : by nature he has a strength for learning, for imitating ; but also a strength for acting, for knowing on his own account. Are we not in a world seen to be Infinite ; the relations lying closest together modified by those latest discovered and lying farthest asunder ? Could you ever spell-bind man into a Scholar merely, so that he had nothing to discover, to correct ; could you ever establish a Theory of the Universe that were entire, unimprovable, and which needed only to be got by heart ; man then were spiritually defunct, the Species we now name Man had ceased to exist. But the gods, kinder to us than we are to ourselves, have forbidden such suicidal acts. As Phlogiston is displaced by Oxygen, and the Epicycles of Ptolemy by the Ellipses of Kepler ; so does Paganism give place to Catholicism, Tyranny to Monarchy, and Feudalism to Representative Government,—where also the process does not stop. Perfection of Practice, like completeness of Opinion, is always approaching, never arrived ; Truth, in the words of Schiller, *immer wird, nie ist* ; never *is*, always *is a-being*.

Sad, truly, were our condition did we know but this, that Change is universal and inevitable. Launched into a dark shoreless sea of Pyrrhonism, what would remain for us but to sail aimless, hopeless ; or make madly merry, while the devouring Death had not yet ingulfed us ? As indeed, we have seen many, and still see many do. Nevertheless so stands it not. The venerator of the Past (and to what pure heart is the Past, in that " moonlight of memory," other than sad and holy ?) sorrows not over its departure, as one utterly bereaved. The true Past departs not, nothing that was worthy in the Past departs ; no Truth or Goodness realized by man ever dies, or can die ; but is all still here, and, recognized or not, lives and works through endless changes. If all things, to speak in the German dialect, are discerned by us, and exist for us, in an element of Time, and therefore of

Mortality and Mutability ; yet Time itself reposes on Eternity : the truly Great and Transcendental has its basis and substance in Eternity ; stands revealed to us as Eternity in a vesture of Time. Thus in all Poetry, Worship, Art, Society, as one form passes into another, nothing is lost : it is but the superficial, as it were the *body* only, that grows obsolete and dies ; under the mortal body lies a *soul* which is immortal; which anew incarnates itself in fairer revelation; and the Present is the living sum-total of the whole Past.

In Change, therefore, there is nothing terrible, nothing supernatural : on the contrary, it lies in the very essence of our lot and life in this world. To-day is not yesterday : we ourselves change ; how can our Works and Thoughts, if they are always to be the fittest, continue always the same ? Change, indeed, is painful ; yet ever needful ; and if Memory have its force and worth, so also has Hope. Nay, if we look well to it, what is all Derangement, and necessity of great Change, in itself such an evil, but the product simply of *increased resources* which the old *methods* can no longer administer ; of new wealth which the old coffers will no longer contain ? What is it, for example, that in our own day bursts asunder the bonds of ancient Political Systems, and perplexes all Europe with the fear of Change, but even this : the increase of social resources, which the old social methods will no longer sufficiently administer ? The new omnipotence of the Steam-engine is hewing asunder quite other mountains than the physical. Have not our economical distresses, those barnyard Conflagrations themselves, the frightfulest madness of our mad epoch, their rise also in what is a real increase : increase of Men ; of human Force ; properly, in such a Planet as ours, the most precious of all increases ? It is true again, the ancient methods of administration will no longer suffice. Must the indomitable millions, full of old Saxon energy and fire, lie cooped-up in this Western Nook, choking one another, as in a Blackhole of Calcutta, while a whole fertile untenanted Earth, desolate for want of the ploughshare, cries : Come and till me, come and reap me ? If the ancient Captains can no longer yield guidance, new must be sought after : for the difficulty lies not in nature, but in artifice ; the European Calcutta-Blackhole has no walls but air ones and paper ones. So too, Scepticism itself, with its innumerable mischiefs, what is it but the sour fruit of a most blessed increase, that of Knowledge ; a fruit too that will not always continue *sour* ?

In fact, much as we have said and mourned about the unproductive prevalence of Metaphysics, it was not without some insight into the use that lies in them. Metaphysical Speculation, if a necessary evil, is the forerunner of much good. The fever of Scepticism must needs burn itself out, and burn out thereby the Impurities that caused it; then again will there be clearness, health. The principle of life, which now struggles painfully, in the outer, thin and barren domain of the Conscious or Mechanical, may then withdraw into its inner sanctuaries, its abysses of mystery and miracle; withdraw deeper than ever into that domain of the Unconscious, by nature infinite and inexhaustible; and creatively work there. From that mystic region, and from that alone, all wonders, all Poesies, and Religions, and Social Systems have proceeded: the like wonders, and greater and higher, lie slumbering there; and, brooded on by the spirit of the waters, will evolve themselves, and rise like exhalations from the Deep.

Of our Modern Metaphysics, accordingly, may not this already be said, that if they have produced no Affirmation, they have destroyed much Negation? It is a disease expelling a disease: the fire of Doubt, as above hinted, consuming away the Doubtful; that so the Certain come to light, and again lie visible on the surface. English or French Metaphysics, in reference to this last stage of the speculative process, are not what we allude to here; but only the Metaphysics of the Germans. In France or England, since the days of Diderot and Hume, though all thought has been of a sceptico-metaphysical texture, so far as there was any Thought, we have seen no Metaphysics; but only more or less ineffectual questionings whether such could be. In the Pyrrhonism of Hume and the Materialism of Diderot, Logic had, as it were, overshot itself, overset itself. Now, though the athlete, to use our old figure, cannot, by much lifting, lift up his own body, he may shift it out of a laming posture, and get to stand in a free one. Such a service have German Metaphysics done for man's mind. The second sickness of Speculation has abolished both itself and the first. Friedrich Schlegel complains much of the fruitlessness, the tumult and transiency of German as of all Metaphysics; and with reason. Yet in that wide-spreading, deep-whirling vortex of Kantism, so soon metamorphosed into Fichteism, Schellingism, and then as Hegelism, and Cousinism, perhaps finally evaporated, is not this issue visible enough, That

Pyrrhonism and Materialism, themselves necessary phenomena in European culture, have disappeared ; and a Faith in Religion has again become possible and inevitable for the scientific mind ; and the word *Free*-thinker no longer means the Denier or Caviller, but the Believer, or the Ready to believe ? Nay, in the higher Literature of Germany, there already lies, for him that can read it, the beginning of a new revelation of the Godlike ; as yet unrecognized by the mass of the world ; but waiting there for recognition, and sure to find it when the fit hour comes. This age also is not wholly without its Prophets.

Again, under another aspect, if Utilitarianism, or Radicalism, or the Mechanical Philosophy, or by whatever name it is called, has still its long task to do ; nevertheless we can now see through it and beyond it : in the better heads, even among us English, it has become obsolete ; as in other countries, it has been, in such heads, for some forty or even fifty years. What sound mind among the French, for example, now fancies that men can be governed by " Constitutions ; " by the never so cunning mechanizing of Self-interests, and all conceivable adjustments of checking and balancing ; in a word, by the best possible solution of this quite insoluble and impossible problem, *Given a world of Knaves, to produce an Honesty from their united action ?* Were not experiments enough of this kind tried before all Europe, and found wanting, when, in that doomsday of France, the infinite gulf of human Passion shivered asunder the thin rinds of Habit ; and burst forth all-devouring, as in seas of Nether Fire ? Which cunningly-devised " Constitution," constitutional, republican, democratic, sansculottic, could bind that raging chasm together ? Were they not all burnt up, like paper as they were, in its molten eddies ; and still the fire-sea raged fiercer than before ? It is not by Mechanism, but by Religion ; not by Self-interest, but by Loyalty, that men are governed or governable.

Remarkable it is, truly, how everywhere the eternal fact begins again to be recognized, that there is a Godlike in human affairs ; that God not only made us and beholds us, but is in us and around us ; that the Age of Miracles, as it ever was, now is. Such recognition we discern on all hands and in all countries : in each country after its own fashion. In France, among the younger nobler minds, strangely enough ; where, in their loud contention with the Actual and Conscious, the Ideal or Unconscious is, for the time,

without exponent ; where Religion means not the parent of Polity, as of all that is highest, but Polity itself ; and this and the other earnest man has not been wanting, who could audibly whisper to himself : " Go to, I will make religion." In England still more strangely ; as in all things, worthy England will have its way : by the shrieking of hysterical women, casting out of devils, and other " gifts of the Holy Ghost." Well might Jean Paul say, in this his twelfth hour of the Night, " the living dream ; " well might he say, " the dead walk." Meanwhile let us rejoice rather that so much has been seen into, were it through never so diffracting media, and never so madly distorted ; that in all dialects, though but half-articulately, this high Gospel begins to be preached : Man is still Man. The genius of Mechanism, as was once before predicted, will not always sit like a choking incubus on our soul ; but at length, when by a new magic Word the old spell is broken, become our slave, and as familiar-spirit do all our bidding. " We are near awakening when we dream that we dream."

He that has an eye and a heart can even now say : Why should I falter ? Light has come into the world ; to such as love Light, so as Light must be loved, with a boundless all-doing, all-enduring love. For the rest, let that vain struggle to read the mystery of the Infinite cease to harass us. It is a mystery which, through all ages, we shall only read here a line of, there another line of. Do we not already know that the name of the Infinite is GOOD, is GOD ? Here on Earth we are as Soldiers, fighting in a foreign land ; that understand not the plan of the campaign, and have no need to understand it ; seeing well what is at our hand to be done. Let us do it like Soldiers ; with submission, with courage, with a heroic joy. " Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might." Behind us, behind each one of us, lie Six Thousand Years of human effort, human conquest : before us is the boundless Time, with its as yet uncreated and unconquered Continents and Eldorados, which we, even we, have to conquer, to create ; and from the bosom of Eternity there shine for us celestial guiding stars.

> " My inheritance how wide and fair !
> Time is my fair seed-field, of Time I'm heir."

From
SARTOR RESARTUS

SARTOR RESARTUS

[1833–34]

BOOK I

CHAPTER VII

THE EVERLASTING NO

Loss of Hope, and of Belief. Profit-and-Loss Philosophy, Teufelsdröckh in his darkness and despair still clings to Truth and follows Duty. Inexpressible pains and fears of Unbelief. Fever-crisis: Protest against the Everlasting No: Baphometic Fire-baptism.

UNDER the strange nebulous envelopment, wherein our Professor has now shrouded himself, no doubt but his spiritual nature is nevertheless progressive, and growing: for how can the "Son of Time," in any case, stand still? We behold him, through those dim years, in a state of crisis, of transition: his mad Pilgrimings, and general solution into aimless Discontinuity, what is all this but a mad Fermentation; wherefrom, the fiercer it is, the clearer product will one day evolve itself?

Such transitions are ever full of pain: thus the Eagle when he moults is sickly; and, to attain his new beak, must harshly dash-off the old one upon rocks. What Stoicism soever our Wanderer, in his individual acts and notions, may affect, it is clear that there is a hot fever of anarchy and misery raging within; coruscations of which flash out: as, indeed, how could there be other? Have we not seen him disappointed, bemocked of Destiny, through long years? All that the young heart might desire and pray for has been denied; nay, as in the last worst instance, offered and then snatched away. Ever an "excellent Passivity"; but of useful, reasonable Activity, essential to the former as Food to Hunger, nothing granted: till at length, in this wild Pilgrimage, he must forcibly seize for

himself an Activity, though useless, unreasonable. Alas, his cup of bitterness, which had been filling drop by drop, ever since that first "ruddy morning" in the Hinterschlag Gymnasium, was at the very lip; and then with that poison-drop, of the Towgood-and-Blumine business, it runs over, and even hisses over in a deluge of foam.

He himself says once, with more justice than originality: "Man is, properly speaking, based upon Hope, he has no other possession but Hope; this world of his is emphatically the Place of Hope." What, then, was our Professor's possession? We see him, for the present, quite shut-out from Hope; looking not into the golden orient, but vaguely all round into a dim copper firmament, pregnant with earthquake and tornado.

Alas, shut-out from Hope, in a deeper sense than we yet dream of! For, as he wanders wearisomely through this world, he has now lost all tidings of another and higher. Full of religion, or at least of religiosity, as our Friend has since exhibited himself, he hides not that, in those days, he was wholly irreligious: "Doubt had darkened into Unbelief," says he; "shade after shade goes grimly over your soul, till you have the fixed, starless, Tartarean black." To such readers as have reflected, what can be called reflecting, on man's life, and happily discovered, in contradiction to much Profit-and-loss Philosophy, speculative and practical, that Soul is *not* synonymous with Stomach; who understand, therefore, in our Friend's words, "that, for man's well-being, Faith is properly the one thing needful; how, with it, Martyrs, otherwise weak, can cheerfully endure the shame and the cross; and without it, Worldlings puke-up their sick existence, by suicide, in the midst of luxury:" to such it will be clear that, for a pure moral nature, the loss of his religious Belief was the loss of everything. Unhappy young man! All wounds, the crush of long-continued Destitution, the stab of false Friendship and of false Love, all wounds in thy so genial heart, would have healed again, had not its life-warmth been withdrawn. Well might he exclaim, in his wild way: "Is there no God, then; but at best an absentee God, sitting idle, ever since the first Sabbath, at the outside of his Universe, and *see*ing it go? Has the word Duty no meaning; is what we call Duty no divine Messenger and Guide, but a false earthly Fantasm, made-up of Desire and Fear, of emanations from the Gallows and from Dr. Graham's Celestial-Bed? Happiness of an

approving Conscience! Did not Paul of Tarsus, whom admiring men have since named Saint, feel that *he* was the chief of sinners, and Nero of Rome, jocund in spirit (*wohlgemuth*), spend much of his time in fiddling? Foolish Word-monger and Motive-grinder, who in thy Logic-mill hast an earthly mechanism for the Godlike itself, and wouldst fain grind me out Virtue from the husks of Pleasure, —I tell thee, Nay! To the unregenerate Prometheus Vinctus of a man, it is ever the bitterest aggravation of his wretchedness that he is conscious of Virtue, that he feels himself the victim not of suffering only, but of injustice. What then? Is the heroic inspiration we name Virtue but some Passion; some bubble of the blood, bubbling in the direction others *profit* by? I know not: only this I know, If what thou namest Happiness be our true aim, then are we all astray. With Stupidity and sound Digestion man may front much. But what, in these dull unimaginative days, are the terrors of Conscience to the diseases of the Liver! Not on Morality, but on Cookery, let us build our stronghold: there brandishing our frying-pan, as censer, let us offer sweet incense to the Devil, and live at ease on the fat things *he* has provided for his Elect!"

Thus has the bewildered Wanderer to stand, as so many have done, shouting question after question into the Sibyl-cave of Destiny, and receive no Answer but an Echo. It is all a grim Desert, this once-fair world of his; wherein is heard only the howling of wild-beasts, or the shrieks of despairing, hate-filled men; and no Pillar of Cloud by day, and no Pillar of Fire by night, any longer guides the Pilgrim. To such length has the spirit of Inquiry carried him. "But what boots it (*was thut's*)?" cries he: "it is but the common lot in this era. Not having come to spiritual majority prior to the *Siècle de Louis Quinze*, and not being born purely a Loghead (*Dummkopf*), thou hadst no other outlook. The whole world is, like thee, sold to Unbelief; their old Temples of the Godhead, which for long have not been rainproof, crumble down; and men ask now: Where is the Godhead; our eyes never saw him?"

Pitiful enough were it, for all these wild utterances, to call our Diogenes wicked. Unprofitable servants as we all are, perhaps at no era of his life was he more decisively the Servant of Goodness, the Servant of God, than even now when doubting God's existence. "One circumstance I note," says he: "after all the nameless woe that Inquiry,

which for me, what it is not always, was genuine Love of Truth, had wrought me, I nevertheless still loved Truth, and would bate no jot of my allegiance to her. 'Truth!' I cried, 'though the Heavens crush me for following her: no Falsehood! though a whole celestial Lubberland were the price of Apostasy.' In conduct it was the same. Had a divine Messenger from the clouds, or miraculous Hand-writing on the wall, convincingly proclaimed to me *This thou shalt do*, with what passionate readiness, as I often thought, would I have done it, had it been leaping into the infernal Fire. Thus, in spite of all Motive-grinders, and Mechanical Profit-and-Loss Philosophies, with the sick ophthalmia and hallucination they had brought on, was the Infinite nature of Duty still dimly present to me: living without God in the world, of God's light I was not utterly bereft; if my as yet sealed eyes, with their unspeakable longing, could nowhere see Him, nevertheless in my heart He was present, and His heaven-written Law still stood legible and sacred there."

Meanwhile, under all these tribulations, and temporal and spiritual destitutions, what must the Wanderer, in his silent soul, have endured! "The painfullest feeling," writes he, "is that of your own Feebleness (*Unkraft*); ever, as the English Milton says, to be weak is the true misery. And yet of your Strength there is and can be no clear feeling, save by what you have prospered in, by what you have done. Between vague wavering Capability and fixed indubitable Performance, what a difference! A certain inarticulate Self-consciousness dwells dimly in us; which only our Works can render articulate and decisively discernible. Our Works are the mirror wherein the spirit first sees its natural lineaments. Hence, too, the folly of that impossible Precept, *Know thyself;* till it be translated into this partially possible one, *Know what thou canst work at.*

"But for me, so strangely unprosperous had I been, the net-result of my Workings amounted as yet simply to—Nothing. How then could I believe in my Strength, when there was as yet no mirror to see it in? Ever did this agitating, yet, as I now perceive, quite frivolous question, remain to me insoluble: Hast thou a certain Faculty, a certain Worth, such even as the most have not; or art thou the completest Dullard of these modern times? Alas, the fearful Unbelief is unbelief in yourself; and how could I

believe ? Had not my first, last Faith in myself, when even to me the Heavens seemed laid open, and I dared to love, been all-too cruelly belied ? The speculative Mystery of Life grew ever more mysterious to me : neither in the practical Mystery had I made the slightest progress, but been everywhere buffeted, foiled, and contemptuously cast out. A feeble unit in the middle of a threatening Infinitude, I seemed to have nothing given me but eyes, whereby to discern my own wretchedness. Invisible yet impenetrable walls, as of Enchantment, divided me from all living : was there, in the wide world, any true bosom I could press trustfully to mine ? O Heaven, No, there was none ! I kept a lock upon my lips ; why should I speak much with that shifting variety of so-called Friends, in whose withered, vain and too-hungry souls Friendship was but an incredible tradition ? In such cases, your resource is to talk little, and that little mostly from the Newspapers. Now when I look back, it was a strange isolation I then lived in. The men and women around me, even speaking with me, were but Figures ; I had, practically, forgotten that they were alive, that they were not merely automatic. In the midst of their crowded streets and assemblages, I walked solitary ; and (except as it was my own heart, not another's, that I kept devouring) savage also, as the tiger in his jungle. Some comfort it would have been, could I, like a Faust, have fancied myself tempted and tormented of the Devil ; for a Hell, as I imagine, without Life, though only diabolic Life, were more frightful : but in our age of Down-pulling and Disbelief, the very Devil has been pulled down, you cannot so much as believe in a Devil. To me the Universe was all void of Life, of Purpose, of Volition, even of Hostility : it was one huge, dead, immeasurable Steam-engine, rolling on, in its dead indifference, to grind me limb from limb. O, the vast, gloomy, solitary Golgotha, and Mill of Death ! Why was the Living banished thither companionless, conscious ? Why, if there is no Devil ; nay, unless the Devil is your God ? "

A prey incessantly to such corrosions, might not, moreover, as the worst aggravation to them, the iron constitution even of a Teufelsdröckh threaten to fail ? We conjecture that he has known sickness ; and, in spite of his locomotive habits, perhaps sickness of the chronic sort. Hear this, for example : " How beautiful to die of broken-heart, on Paper ! Quite another thing in practice ; every window of

your Feeling, even of your Intellect, as it were, begrimed and mud-bespattered, so that no pure ray can enter; a whole Drugshop in your inwards; the fordone soul drowning slowly in quagmires of Disgust!"

Putting all which external and internal miseries together, may we not find in the following sentences, quite in our Professor's still vein, significance enough? "From Suicide a certain aftershine (*Nachschein*) of Christianity withheld me: perhaps also a certain indolence of character; for, was not that a remedy I had at any time within reach? Often, however, was there a question present to me: Should some one now, at the turning of that corner, blow thee suddenly out of Space, into the other World, or other No-world, by pistol-shot,—how were it? On which ground, too, I have often, in sea-storms and sieged cities and other death-scenes, exhibited an imperturbability, which passed, falsely enough, for courage."

"So had it lasted," concludes the Wanderer, "so had it lasted, as in bitter protracted Death-agony, through long years. The heart within me, unvisited by any heavenly dewdrop, was smouldering in sulphurous, slow-consuming fire. Almost since earliest memory I had shed no tear; or once only when I, murmuring half-audibly, recited Faust's Deathsong, that wild *Selig der den er im Siegesglanze findet* (Happy whom *he* finds in Battle's splendour), and thought that of this last Friend even I was not forsaken, that Destiny itself could not doom me not to die. Having no hope, neither had I any definite fear, were it of Man or of Devil: nay, I often felt as if it might be solacing, could the Arch-Devil himself, though in Tartarean terrors, but rise to me, that I might tell him a little of my mind. And yet, strangely enough, I lived in a continual, indefinite, pining fear; tremulous, pusillanimous, apprehensive of I knew not what; it seemed as if all things in the Heavens above and the Earth beneath would hurt me; as if the Heavens and the Earth were but boundless jaws of a devouring monster, wherein I, palpitating, waited to be devoured.

"Full of such humour, and perhaps the miserablest man in the whole French Capital or Suburbs, was I, one sultry Dog-day, after much perambulation, toiling along the dirty little *Rue Saint-Thomas de l'Enfer*, among civic rubbish enough, in a close atmosphere, and over pavements hot as Nebuchadnezzar's Furnace; whereby doubtless my spirits were little cheered; when, all at once, there rose a Thought

in me, and I asked myself: 'What *art* thou afraid of? Wherefore, like a coward, dost thou forever pip and whimper, and go cowering and trembling? Despicable biped! what is the sum-total of the worst that lies before thee? Death? Well, Death; and say the pangs of Tophet too, and all that the Devil and Man may, will or can do against thee! Hast thou not a heart; canst thou not suffer whatsoever it be; and, as a Child of Freedom, though outcast, trample Tophet itself under thy feet, while it consumes thee? Let it come, then; I will meet it and defy it!' And as I so thought, there rushed like a stream of fire over my whole soul; and I shook base Fear away from me forever. I was strong, of unknown strength; a spirit, almost a god. Ever from that time, the temper of my misery was changed: not Fear or whining Sorrow was it, but Indignation and grim fire-eyed Defiance.

"Thus had the EVERLASTING NO (*das ewige Nein*) pealed authoritatively through all the recesses of my Being, of my ME; and then was it that my whole ME stood up, in native God-created majesty, and with emphasis recorded its Protest. Such a Protest, the most important transaction in Life, may that same Indignation and Defiance, in a psychological point of view, be fitly called. The Everlasting No had said: 'Behold, thou art fatherless, outcast, and the Universe is mine (the Devil's);' to which my whole Me now made answer: '*I* am not thine, but Free, and forever hate thee!'

"It is from this hour that I incline to date my Spiritual New-birth, or Baphometic Fire-baptism; perhaps I directly thereupon began to be a Man."

CHAPTER IX

THE EVERLASTING YEA

Temptations in the Wilderness: Victory over the Tempter. Annihilation of Self. Belief in God, and love to Man. The Origin of Evil, a problem ever requiring to be solved anew; Teufelsdröckh's solution. Love of Happiness a vain whim: A Higher in man than Love of Happiness. The Everlasting Yea. Worship of Sorrow. Voltaire: his task now finished. Conviction worthless, impossible, without Conduct. The true Ideal, the Actual: Up and work!

"TEMPTATIONS in the Wilderness!" exclaims Teufelsdröckh: "Have we not all to be tried with such? Not so easily can the old Adam, lodged in us by birth, be dispossessed. Our Life is compassed round with Necessity; yet is the meaning of Life itself no other than Freedom, than Voluntary Force: thus have we a warfare; in the beginning, especially, a hard-fought battle. For the God-given mandate, *Work thou in Welldoing*, lies mysteriously written, in Promethean Prophetic Characters, in our hearts; and leaves us no rest, night or day, till it be deciphered and obeyed; till it burn forth, in our conduct, a visible, acted Gospel of Freedom. And as the clay-given mandate, *Eat thou and be filled*, at the same time persuasively proclaims itself through every nerve,—must not there be a confusion, a contest, before the better Influence can become the upper?

"To me nothing seems more natural than that the Son of Man, when such God-given mandate first prophetically stirs within him, and the Clay must now be vanquished or vanquish,—should be carried of the spirit into grim Solitudes, and there fronting the Tempter do grimmest battle with him; defiantly setting him at naught, till he yield and fly. Name it as we choose: with or without visible Devil, whether in the natural Desert of rocks and sands, or in the populous moral Desert of selfishness and baseness,—to such Temptation are we all called. Unhappy if we are not!

Unhappy if we are but Half-men, in whom that divine handwriting has never blazed forth, all-subduing, in true sun-splendour ; but quivers dubiously amid meaner lights : or smoulders, in dull pain, in darkness, under earthly vapours !—Our Wilderness is the wide World in an Atheistic Century ; our Forty Days are long years of suffering and fasting : nevertheless, to these also comes an end. Yes, to me also was given, if not Victory, yet the consciousness of Battle, and the resolve to persevere therein while life or faculty is left. To me also, entangled in the enchanted forests, demon-peopled, doleful of sight and of sound, it was given, after weariest wanderings, to work out my way into the higher sunlit slopes—of that Mountain which has no summit, or whose summit is in Heaven only ! "

He says elsewhere, under a less ambitious figure ; as figures are, once for all, natural to him : " Has not thy Life been that of most sufficient men (*tüchtigen Männer*) thou hast known in this generation ? An out-flush of foolish young Enthusiasm, like the first fallow-crop, wherein are as many weeds as valuable herbs : this all parched away, under the Droughts of practical and spiritual Unbelief, as Disappointment, in thought and act, often-repeated gave rise to Doubt, and Doubt gradually settled into Denial ! If I have had a second-crop, and now see the perennial greensward, and sit under umbrageous cedars, which defy all Drought (and Doubt) ; herein too, be the Heavens praised, I am not without examples, and even exemplars."

So that, for Teufelsdröckh also, there has been a " glorious revolution " : these mad shadow-hunting and shadow-hunted Pilgrimings of his were but some purifying " Temptation in the Wilderness," before his apostolic work (such as it was) could begin : which Temptation is now happily over, and the Devil once more worsted ! Was " that high moment in the *Rue de l'Enfer*," then, properly the turning-point of the battle ; when the Fiend said, *Worship me, or be torn in shreds ;* and was answered valiantly with an *Apage Satana ?*—Singular Teufelsdröckh, would thou hadst told thy singular story in plain words ! But it is fruitless to look there, in those Paper-bags, for such. Nothing but innuendoes, figurative crotchets : a typical Shadow, fitfully wavering, prophetico-satiric ; no clear logical Picture. " How paint to the sensual eye," asks he once, " what passes in the Holy-of-Holies of Man's Soul ; in what words, known to these profane times, speak even afar-off of the unspeak-

able ? " We ask in turn : Why perplex these times, profane as they are, with needless obscurity, by omission and by commission ? Not mystical only is our Professor, but whimsical ; and involves himself, now more than ever, in eye-bewildering *chiaroscuro*. Successive glimpses, here faithfully imparted, our more gifted readers must endeavour to combine for their own behoof.

He says : " The hot Harmattan wind had raged itself out ; its howl went silent within me ; and the long-deafened soul could now hear. I paused in my wild wanderings ; and sat me down to wait, and consider ; for it was as if the hour of change drew nigh. I seemed to surrender, to renounce utterly, and say : Fly, then, false shadows of Hope ; I will chase you no more, I will believe you no more. And ye too, haggard spectres of Fear, I care not for you ; ye too are all shadows and a lie. Let me rest here : for I am way-weary and life-weary ; I will rest here, were it but to die : to die or to live is alike to me ; alike insignificant."—And again : " Here, then, as I lay in that CENTRE OF INDIFFERENCE ; cast, doubtless by benignant upper Influence, into a healing sleep, the heavy dreams rolled gradually away, and I awoke to a new Heaven and a new Earth. The first preliminary moral Act, Annihilation of Self (*Selbsttödtung*), had been happily accomplished ; and my mind's eyes were now unsealed, and its hands ungyved."

Might we not also conjecture that the following passage refers to his Locality, during this same " healing sleep " ; that his Pilgrim-staff lies cast aside here, on " the high table-land " ; and indeed that the repose is already taking wholesome effect on him ? If it were not that the tone, in some parts, has more of riancy, even of levity, than we could have expected ! However, in Teufelsdröckh, there is always the strangest Dualism : light dancing, with guitar-music, will be going on in the fore-court, while by fits from within comes the faint whimpering of woe and wail. We transcribe the piece entire :

" Beautiful it was to sit there, as in my skyey Tent, musing and meditating ; on the high table-land, in front of the Mountains ; over me, as roof, the azure Dome, and around me, for walls, four azure-flowing curtains,—namely, of the Four azure Winds, on whose bottom-fringes also I have seen gilding. And then to fancy the fair Castles that stood sheltered in these Mountain hollows ; with their green flower-lawns, and white dames and damosels, lovely

enough : or better still, the straw-roofed Cottages, wherein stood many a Mother baking bread, with her children round her :—all hidden and protectingly folded-up in the valley-folds ; yet there and alive, as sure as if I beheld them. Or to see, as well as fancy, the nine Towns and Villages, that lay round my mountain-seat, which, in still weather, were wont to speak to me (by their steeple-bells) with metal tongue ; and, in almost all weather, proclaimed their vitality by repeated Smoke-clouds ; whereon, as on a culinary horologe, I might read the hour of the day. For it was the smoke of cookery, as kind housewives at morning, midday, eventide, were boiling their husbands' kettles ; and ever a blue pillar rose up into the air, successively or simultaneously, from each of the nine, saying, as plainly as smoke could say : Such and such a meal is getting ready here. Not uninteresting ! For you have the whole Borough, with all its love-makings and scandal-mongeries, contentions and contentments, as in miniature, and could cover it all with your hat. —If, in my wide Wayfarings, I had learned to look into the business of the World in its details, here perhaps was the place for combining it into general propositions, and deducing inferences therefrom.

" Often also could I see the black Tempest marching in anger through the Distance : round some Schreckhorn, as yet grim-blue, would the eddying vapour gather, and there tumultuously eddy, and flow down like a mad witch's hair ; till, after a space, it vanished, and, in the clear sunbeam, your Schreckhorn stood smiling grim-white, for the vapour had held snow. How thou fermentest and elaboratest, in thy great fermenting-vat and laboratory of an Atmosphere, of a World, O Nature !—Or what is Nature ? Ha ! why do I not name thee GOD ? Art not thou the ' Living Garment of God ' ? O Heavens, is it, in very deed, HE, then, that ever speaks through thee ; that lives and loves in thee, that lives and loves in me ?

" Fore-shadows, call them rather fore-splendours, of that Truth, and Beginning of Truths, fell mysteriously over my soul. Sweeter than Dayspring to the Shipwrecked in Nova Zembla ; ah, like the mother's voice to her little child that strays bewildered, weeping, in unknown tumults ; like soft streamings of celestial music to my too-exasperated heart, came that Evangel. The Universe is not dead and demoniacal, a charnel-house with spectres ; but godlike, and my Father's !

" With other eyes, too, could I now look upon my fellow man : with an infinite Love, an infinite Pity. Poor, wandering, wayward man ! Art thou not tried, and beaten with stripes, even as I am ? Ever, whether thou bear the royal mantle or the beggar's gabardine, art thou not so weary, so heavy-laden ; and thy Bed of Rest is but a Grave. O my Brother, my Brother, why cannot I shelter thee in my bosom, and wipe away all tears from thy eyes !—Truly, the din of many-voiced Life, which, in this solitude, with the mind's organ, I could hear, was no longer a maddening discord, but a melting one ; like inarticulate cries, and sobbings of a dumb creature, which in the ear of Heaven are prayers. The poor Earth, with her poor joys, was now my needy Mother, not my cruel Stepdame ; Man, with his so mad Wants and so mean Endeavours, had become the dearer to me ; and even for his sufferings and his sins, I now first named him Brother. Thus was I standing in the porch of that '*Sanctuary of Sorrow*' ; by strange, steep ways, had I too been guided thither ; and ere long its sacred gates would open, and the '*Divine Depth of Sorrow*' lie disclosed to me."

The Professor says, he here first got eye on the Knot that had been strangling him, and straightway could unfasten it, and was free. " A vain interminable controversy," writes he, " touching what is at present called Origin of Evil, or some such thing, arises in every soul, since the beginning of the world ; and in every soul, that would pass from idle Suffering into actual Endeavouring, must first be put an end to. The most, in our time, have to go content with a simple, incomplete enough Suppression of this controversy ; to a few some Solution of it is indispensable. In every new era, too, such Solution comes-out in different terms ; and ever the Solution of the last era has become obsolete, and is found unserviceable. For it is man's nature to change his Dialect from century to century ; he cannot help it though he would. The authentic *Church-Catechism* of our present century has not yet fallen into my hands : meanwhile, for my own private behoof, I attempt to elucidate the matter so. Man's Unhappiness, as I construe, comes of his Greatness ; it is because there is an Infinite in him, which with all his cunning he cannot quite bury under the Finite. Will the whole Finance Ministers and Upholsterers and Confectioners of modern Europe undertake, in joint-stock company, to make one Shoeblack HAPPY ? They cannot

accomplish it, above an hour or two: for the Shoeblack also has a Soul quite other than his Stomach; and would require, if you consider it, for his permanent satisfaction and saturation, simply this allotment, no more, and no less: *God's infinite Universe altogether to himself*, therein to enjoy infinitely, and fill every wish as fast as it rose. Oceans of Hochheimer, a Throat like that of Ophiuchus: speak not of them; to the infinite Shoeblack they are as nothing. No sooner is your ocean filled, than he grumbles that it might have been of better vintage. Try him with half of a Universe, of an Omnipotence, he sets to quarreling with the proprietor of the other half, and declares himself the most maltreated of men.—Always there is a black spot in our sunshine: it is even, as I said, the *Shadow of Ourselves*.

"But the whim we have of Happiness is somewhat thus. By certain valuations, and averages, of our own striking, we come upon some sort of average terrestrial lot; this we fancy belongs to us by nature, and of indefeasible right. It is simple payment of our wages, of our deserts; requires neither thanks nor complaint; only such *overplus* as there may be do we account Happiness; any *deficit* again is Misery. Now consider that we have the valuation of our own deserts ourselves, and what a fund of Self-conceit there is in each of us,—do you wonder that the balance should so often dip the wrong way, and many a Blockhead cry: See there, what a payment; was ever worthy gentleman so used!—I tell thee, Blockhead, it all comes of thy Vanity; of what thou *fanciest* those same deserts of thine to be. Fancy that thou deservest to be hanged (as is most likely), thou wilt feel it happiness to be only shot: fancy that thou deservest to be hanged in a hair-halter, it will be a luxury to die in hemp.

"So true is it, what I then said, that *the Fraction of Life can be increased in value not so much by increasing your Numerator as by lessening your Denominator*. Nay, unless my Algebra deceive me, *Unity* itself divided by *Zero* will give *Infinity*. Make thy claim of wages a zero, then; thou hast the world under thy feet. Well did the Wisest of our time write: 'It is only with Renunciation (*Entsagen*) that Life, properly speaking, can be said to begin.'

"I asked myself: What is this that, ever since earliest years, thou hast been fretting and fuming, and lamenting and self-tormenting, on account of? Say it in a word: is it not because thou art not HAPPY? Because the THOU

(sweet gentleman) is not sufficiently honoured, nourished, soft-bedded, and lovingly cared-for? Foolish soul! What Act of Legislature was there that *thou* shouldst be Happy? A little while ago thou hadst no right to *be* at all. What if thou wert born and predestined not to be Happy, but to be Unhappy! Art thou nothing other than a Vulture, then, that fliest through the Universe seeking after somewhat to *eat*; and shrieking dolefully because carrion enough is not given thee? Close thy *Byron*; open thy *Goethe*."

"*Es leuchtet mir ein*, I see a glimpse of it!" cries he elsewhere: "there is in man a HIGHER than Love of Happiness: he can do without Happiness, and instead thereof find Blessedness! Was it not to preach-forth this same HIGHER that sages and martyrs, the Poet and the Priest, in all times, have spoken and suffered; bearing testimony, through life and through death, of the Godlike that is in Man, and how in the Godlike only has he Strength and Freedom? Which God-inspired Doctrine art thou also honoured to be taught; O Heavens! and broken with manifold merciful Afflictions, even till thou become contrite, and learn it! O, thank thy Destiny for these; thankfully bear what yet remain: thou hadst need of them; the Self in thee needed to be annihilated. By benignant fever-paroxysms is Life rooting out the deep-seated chronic Disease, and triumphs over Death. On the roaring billows of Time, thou art not engulfed, but borne aloft into the azure of Eternity. Love not Pleasure; love God. This is the EVERLASTING YEA, wherein all contradiction is solved: wherein whoso walks and works, it is well with him."

And again: "Small is it that thou canst trample the Earth with its injuries under thy feet, as old Greek Zeno trained thee: thou canst love the Earth while it injures thee, and even because it injures thee; for this a Greater than Zeno was needed, and he too was sent. Knowest thou that '*Worship of Sorrow*'? The Temple thereof, founded some eighteen centuries ago, now lies in ruins, overgrown with jungle, the habitation of doleful creatures: nevertheless, venture forward; in a low crypt, arched out of falling fragments, thou findest the Altar still there, and its sacred Lamp perennially burning."

Without pretending to comment on which strange utterances, the Editor will only remark, that there lies beside them much of a still more questionable character; unsuited to the general apprehension; nay wherein he

himself does not see his way. Nebulous disquisitions on Religion, yet not without bursts of splendour; on the "perennial continuance of Inspiration," on Prophecy; that there are "true Priests, as well as Baal-Priests, in our own day"; with more of the like sort. We select some fractions, by way of finish to this farrago.

"Cease, my much-respected Herr von Voltaire," thus apostrophises the Professor: "shut thy sweet voice; for the task appointed thee seems finished. Sufficiently hast thou demonstrated this proposition, considerable or otherwise: That the Mythus of the Christian Religion looks not in the eighteenth century as it did in the eighth. Alas, were thy six-and-thirty quartos, and the six-and-thirty thousand other quartos and folios, and flying sheets or reams, printed before and since on the same subject, all needed to convince us of so little! But what next? Wilt thou help us to embody the divine Spirit of that Religion in a new Mythus, in a new vehicle and vesture, that our Souls, otherwise too like perishing, may live? What! thou hast no faculty in that kind? Only a torch for burning, no hammer for building? Take our thanks, then, and ——thyself away.

"Meanwhile what are antiquated Mythuses to me? Or is the God present, felt in my own heart, a thing which Herr von Voltaire will dispute out of me; or dispute into me? To the '*Worship of Sorrow*' ascribe what origin and genesis thou pleasest, *has* not that Worship originated, and been generated; is it not *here*? Feel it in thy heart, and then say whether it is of God! This is Belief; all else is Opinion,—for which latter whoso will, let him worry and be worried."

"Neither," observes he elsewhere, "shall ye tear-out one another's eyes, struggling over 'Plenary Inspiration,' and such-like: try rather to get a little even Partial Inspiration, each of you for himself. One Bible I know, of whose Plenary Inspiration doubt is not so much as possible; nay with my own eyes I saw the God's-Hand writing it: thereof all other Bibles are but Leaves,—say, in Picture-Writing to assist the weaker faculty."

Or, to give the wearied reader relief, and bring it to an end, let him take the following perhaps more intelligible passage:

"To me, in this our life," says the Professor, "which is an internecine warfare with the Time-spirit, other warfare

seems questionable. Hast thou in any way a Contention with thy brother, I advise thee, think well what the meaning thereof is. If thou gauge it to the bottom, it is simply this: 'Fellow, see! thou art taking more than thy share of Happiness in the world, something from *my* share: which, by the Heavens, thou shalt not; nay I will fight thee rather.'—Alas, and the whole lot to be divided is such a beggarly matter, truly a 'feast of shells,' for the substance has been spilled out: not enough to quench one Appetite; and the collective human species clutching at them!—Can we not, in all such cases, rather say: 'Take it, thou too-ravenous individual; take that pitiful additional fraction of a share, which I reckoned mine, but which thou so wantest; take it with a blessing: would to Heaven I had enough for thee!'—If Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre* be, 'to a certain extent, Applied Christianity,' surely to a still greater extent, so is this. We have here not a Whole Duty of Man, yet a Half Duty, namely the Passive half: could we but do it, as we can demonstrate it!

"But indeed Conviction, were it never so excellent, is worthless till it convert itself into Conduct. Nay properly Conviction is not possible till then; inasmuch as all Speculation is by nature endless, formless, a vortex amid vortices: only by a felt indubitable certainty of Experience does it find any centre to revolve round, and so fashion itself into a system. Most true is it, as a wise man teaches us, that 'Doubt of any sort cannot be removed except by Action.' On which ground, too, let him who gropes painfully in darkness or uncertain light, and prays vehemently that the dawn may ripen into day, lay this other precept well to heart, which to me was of invaluable service: '*Do the Duty which lies nearest thee*,' which thou knowest to be a Duty! Thy second Duty will already have become clearer.

"May we not say, however, that the hour of Spiritual Enfranchisement is even this: When your Ideal World, wherein the whole man has been dimly struggling and inexpressibly languishing to work, becomes revealed, and thrown open; and you discover, with amazement enough, like the Lothario in *Wilhelm Meister*, that your 'America is here or nowhere'? The Situation that has not its Duty, its Ideal, was never yet occupied by man. Yes here, in this poor, miserable, hampered, despicable Actual, wherein thou even now standest, here or nowhere is thy Ideal: work it out therefrom; and working, believe, live,

be free. Fool! the Ideal is in thyself, the impediment too is in thyself: thy Condition is but the stuff thou art to shape that same Ideal out of: what matters whether such stuff be of this sort or that, so the Form thou give it be heroic, be poetic? O thou that pinest in the imprisonment of the Actual, and criest bitterly to the gods for a kingdom wherein to rule and create, know this of a truth: the thing thou seekest is already with thee, 'here or nowhere,' couldst thou only see!

"But it is with man's Soul as it was with Nature: the beginning of Creation is—Light. Till the eye have vision, the whole members are in bonds. Divine moment, when over the tempest-tost Soul, as once over the wild-weltering Chaos, it is spoken: Let there be Light! Ever to the greatest that has felt such moment, is it not miraculous and God-announcing; even as, under simpler figures, to the simplest and least. The mad primeval Discord is hushed; the rudely-jumbled conflicting elements bind themselves into separate Firmaments: deep silent rock-foundations are built beneath; and the skyey vault with its everlasting Luminaries above: instead of a dark wasteful Chaos, we have a blooming, fertile, Heaven-encompassed World.

"I too could now say to myself: Be no longer a Chaos, but a World, or even Worldkin. Produce! Produce! Were it but the pitifullest infinitesimal fraction of a Product, produce it, in God's name! 'Tis the utmost thou hast in thee: out with it, then. Up, up! Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy whole might. Work while it is called Today; for the Night cometh, wherein no man can work."

BOOK III

CHAPTER VIII

NATURAL SUPERNATURALISM

Deep significance of Miracles. Littleness of human Science: Divine incomprehensibility of Nature. Custom blinds us to the miraculousness of daily-recurring miracles; so do Names. Space and Time, appearances only; forms of human Thought: A glimpse of Immortality. How Space hides from us the wondrousness of our commonest powers; and Time, the divinely miraculous course of human history.

It is in his stupendous Section, headed *Natural Supernaturalism*, that the Professor first becomes a Seer; and, after long effort, such as we have witnessed, finally subdues under his feet this refractory Clothes-Philosophy, and takes victorious possession thereof. Phantasms enough he has had to struggle with; "Cloth-webs and Cob-webs," of Imperial Mantles, Superannuated Symbols, and what not: yet still did he courageously pierce through. Nay, worst of all, two quite mysterious, world-embracing Phantasms, Time and Space, have ever hovered round him, perplexing and bewildering: but with these also he now resolutely grapples, these also he victoriously rends asunder. In a word, he has looked fixedly on Existence, till, one after the other, its earthly hulls and garnitures have all melted away; and now, to his rapt vision, the interior celestial Holy of Holies lies disclosed.

Here, therefore, properly it is that the Philosophy of Clothes attains to Transcendentalism; this last leap, can we but clear it, takes us safe into the promised land, where *Palingenesia*, in all senses, may be considered as beginning. "Courage, then!" may our Diogenes exclaim, with better right than Diogenes the First once did. This stupendous Section we, after long painful meditation, have found not to be unintelligible; but, on the contrary, to grow clear, nay radiant, and all-illuminating. Let the reader, turning on it what utmost force of speculative intellect is in him, do his part; as we, by judicious selection and adjustment, shall study to do ours:

"Deep has been, and is, the significance of Miracles," thus quietly begins the Professor; "far deeper perhaps than we imagine. Meanwhile, the question of questions were: What specially is a Miracle? To that Dutch King of Siam, an icicle had been a miracle; whoso had carried with him an air-pump, and vial of vitriolic ether, might have worked a miracle. To my Horse, again, who unhappily is still more unscientific, do not I work a miracle, and magical '*Open sesame!*' every time I please to pay twopence, and open for him an impassable *Schlagbaum*, or shut Turnpike?

"'But is not a real Miracle simply a violation of the Laws of Nature?' ask several. Whom I answer by this new question: What are the Laws of Nature? To me perhaps the rising of one from the dead were no violation of these Laws, but a confirmation; were some far deeper Law, now first penetrated into, and by Spiritual Force, even as the rest have all been, brought to bear on us with its Material Force.

"Here too may some inquire, not without astonishment: On what ground shall one, that can make Iron swim, come and declare that therefore he can teach Religion? To us, truly, of the Nineteenth Century, such declaration were inept enough; which nevertheless to our fathers, of the First Century, was full of meaning.

"'But is it not the deepest Law of Nature that she be constant?' cries an illuminated class: 'Is not the Machine of the Universe fixed to move by unalterable rules?' Probable enough, good friends: nay I, too, must believe that the God, whom ancient inspired men assert to be 'without variableness or shadow of turning,' does indeed never change; that Nature, that the Universe, which no one whom it so pleases can be prevented from calling a Machine, does move by the most unalterable rules. And now of you, too, I make the old inquiry: What those same unalterable rules, forming the complete Statute-Book of Nature, may possibly be?

"They stand written in our Works of Science, say you; in the accumulated records of Man's Experience?—Was Man with his Experience present at the Creation, then, to see how it all went on? Have any deepest scientific individuals yet dived down to the foundations of the Universe, and gauged everything there? Did the Maker take them into His counsel; that they read His groundplan of the incomprehensible All; and can say, This stands marked therein, and no more than this? Alas, not in anywise! These scientific

individuals have been nowhere but where we also are; have seen some handbreadths deeper than we see into the Deep that is infinite, without bottom as without shore.

"Laplace's Book on the Stars, wherein he exhibits that certain Planets, with their Satellites, gyrate round our worthy Sun, at a rate and in a course, which, by greatest good fortune, he and the like of him have succeeded in detecting,—is to me as precious as to another. But is this what thou namest 'Mechanism of the Heavens,' and 'System of the World'; this, wherein Sirius and the Pleiades, and all Herschel's Fifteen-thousand Suns per minute, being left out, some paltry handful of Moons, and inert Balls had been—looked at, nicknamed, and marked in the Zodiacal Way-bill; so that we can now prate of their Whereabout; their How, their Why, their What, being hid from us, as in the signless Inane?

"System of Nature! To the wisest man, wide as is his vision, Nature remains of quite *infinite* depth, of quite infinite expansion; and all Experience thereof limits itself to some few computed centuries and measured square-miles. The course of Nature's phases, on this our little fraction of a Planet, is partially known to us: but who knows what deeper courses these depend on; what infinitely larger Cycle (of causes) our little Epicycle revolves on? To the Minnow every cranny and pebble, and quality and accident, of its little native Creek may have become familiar: but does the Minnow understand the Ocean Tides and periodic Currents, the Trade-winds, and Monsoons, and Moon's Eclipses; by all which the condition of its little Creek is regulated, and may, from time to time (*un*miraculously enough), be quite overset and reversed? Such a minnow is Man; his Creek this Planet Earth; his Ocean the immeasurable All; his Monsoons and periodic Currents the mysterious Course of Providence through Æons of Æons.

"We speak of the Volume of Nature: and truly a Volume it is,—whose Author and Writer is God. To read it! Dost thou, does man, so much as well know the Alphabet thereof? With its Words, Sentences, and grand descriptive Pages, poetical and philosophical, spread out through Solar Systems, and Thousands of Years, we shall not try thee. It is a Volume written in celestial hieroglyphs, in the true Sacred-writing; of which even Prophets are happy that they can read here a line and there a line. As for your Institutes, and Academies of Science, they strive bravely;

and, from amid the thick-crowded, inextricably intertwisted hieroglyphic writing, pick out, by dextrous combination, some Letters in the vulgar Character, and therefrom put together this and the other economic Recipe, of high avail in Practice. That Nature is more than some boundless Volume of such Recipes, or huge, well-nigh inexhaustible Domestic-Cookery Book, of which the whole secret will in this manner one day evolve itself, the fewest dream.

"Custom," continues the Professor, "doth make dotards of us all. Consider well, thou wilt find that Custom is the greatest of Weavers; and weaves air-raiment for all the Spirits of the Universe; whereby indeed these dwell with us visibly, as ministering servants, in our houses and workshops; but their spiritual nature becomes, to the most, forever hidden. Philosophy complains that Custom has hoodwinked us, from the first; that we do everything by Custom, even Believe by it; that our very Axioms, let us boast of Free-thinking as we may, are oftenest simply such Beliefs as we have never heard questioned. Nay, what is Philosophy throughout but a continual battle against Custom; an ever-renewed effort to *transcend* the sphere of blind Custom, and so become Transcendental?

"Innumerable are the illusions and legerdemain-tricks of Custom: but of all these, perhaps the cleverest is her knack of persuading us that the Miraculous, by simple repetition, ceases to be Miraculous. True, it is by this means we live; for man must work as well as wonder: and herein is Custom so far a kind nurse, guiding him to his true benefit. But she is a fond foolish nurse, or rather we are false foolish nurselings, when, in our resting and reflecting hours, we prolong the same deception. Am I to view the Stupendous with stupid indifference, because I have seen it twice, or two-hundred, or two-million times? There is no reason in Nature or in Art why I should: unless, indeed, I am a mere Work-Machine, for whom the divine gift of Thought were no other than the terrestrial gift of Steam is to the Steam-engine; a power whereby Cotton might be spun, and money and money's worth realised.

"Notable enough too, here as elsewhere, wilt thou find the potency of Names; which indeed are but one kind of such custom-woven, wonder-hiding Garments. Witchcraft, and all manner of Spectre-work, and Demonology, we have now named Madness and Diseases of the Nerves. Seldom

reflecting that still the new question comes upon us : What is Madness, what are Nerves ? Ever, as before, does Madness remain a mysterious-terrific, altogether *infernal* boiling-up of the Nether Chaotic Deep, through this fair-painted Vision of Creation, which swims thereon, which we name the Real. Was Luther's Picture of the Devil less a Reality, whether it were formed within the bodily eye, or without it ? In every the wisest Soul lies a whole world of internal Madness, an authentic Demon-Empire ; out of which, indeed, his world of Wisdom has been creatively built together, and now rests there, as on its dark foundations does a habitable flowery Earth-rind.

" But deepest of all illusory Appearances, for hiding Wonder, as for many other ends, are your two grand fundamental world-enveloping Appearances, SPACE and TIME. These, as spun and woven for us from before Birth itself, to clothe our celestial ME for dwelling here, and yet to blind it,—lie all-embracing, as the universal canvas, or warp and woof, whereby all minor Illusions, in this Phantasm Existence, weave and paint themselves. In vain, while here on Earth, shall you endeavour to strip them off ; you can, at best, but rend them asunder for moments, and look through.

" Fortunatus had a wishing Hat, which when he put on, and wished himself Anywhere, behold he was There. By this means had Fortunatus triumphed over Space, he had annihilated Space ; for him there was no Where, but all was Here. Were a Hatter to establish himself, in the Wahngasse of Weissnichtwo, and make felts of this sort for all mankind, what a world we should have of it ! Still stranger, should, on the opposite side of the street, another Hatter establish himself ; and, as his fellow-craftsman made Space-annihilating Hats, make Time-annihilating ! Of both would I purchase, were it with my last groschen ; but chiefly of this latter. To clap-on your felt, and, simply by wishing that you were Any*where*, straightway to be *There !* Next to clap-on your other felt, and, simply by wishing that you were Any*when*, straightway to be *Then !* This were indeed the grander : shooting at will from the Fire-Creation of the World to its Fire-Consummation ; here historically present in the First Century, conversing face to face with Paul and Seneca ; there prophetically in the Thirty-first, conversing also face to face with other Pauls

and Senecas, who as yet stand hidden in the depth of that late time!

"Or thinkest thou it were impossible, unimaginable? Is the Past annihilated, then, or only past; is the Future non-extant, or only future? Those mystic faculties of thine, Memory and Hope, already answer: already through those mystic avenues, thou the Earth-blinded summonest both Past and Future, and communest with them, though as yet darkly, and with mute beckonings. The curtains of Yesterday drop down, the curtains of Tomorrow roll up; but Yesterday and Tomorrow both *are*. Pierce through the Time-element, glance into the Eternal. Believe what thou findest written in the sanctuaries of Man's Soul, even as all Thinkers, in all ages, have devoutly read it there: that Time and Space are not God, but creations of God; that with God as it is a universal HERE, so is it an everlasting NOW.

"And seest thou therein any glimpse of IMMORTALITY? —O Heaven! Is the white Tomb of our Loved One, who died from our arms, and had to be left behind us there, which rises in the distance, like a pale, mournfully receding Milestone, to tell how many toilsome uncheered miles we have journeyed on alone,—but a pale spectral Illusion! Is the lost Friend still mysteriously Here, even as we are Here mysteriously, with God!—Know of a truth that only the Time-shadows have perished, or are perishable; that the real Being of whatever was, and whatever is, and whatever will be, *is* even now and forever. This, should it unhappily seem new, thou mayest ponder at thy leisure; for the next twenty years, or the next twenty centuries: believe it thou must; understand it thou canst not.

"That the Thought-forms, Space and Time, wherein, once for all, we are sent into this Earth to live, should condition and determine our whole Practical reasonings, conceptions, and imagings or imaginings, seems altogether fit, just, and unavoidable. But that they should, furthermore, usurp such sway over pure spiritual Meditation, and blind us to the wonder everywhere lying close on us, seems nowise so. Admit Space and Time to their due rank as Forms of Thought; nay even, if thou wilt, to their quite undue rank of Realities: and consider, then, with thyself how their thin disguises hide from us the brightest God-effulgences! Thus, were it not miraculous, could I stretch forth my hand and clutch the Sun? Yet thou seest me daily stretch forth my hand and therewith clutch many a

thing, and swing it hither and thither. Art thou a grown baby, then, to fancy that the Miracle lies in miles of distance or in pounds avoirdupois of weight; and not to see that the true inexplicable God-revealing Miracle lies in this, that I can stretch forth my hand at all; that I have free Force to clutch aught therewith? Innumerable other of this sort are the deceptions, and wonder-hiding stupefactions, which Space practises on us.

"Still worse is it with regard to Time. Your grand anti-magician, and universal wonder-hider, is this same lying Time. Had we but the Time-annihilating Hat, to put on for once only, we should see ourselves in a World of Miracles, wherein all fabled or authentic Thaumaturgy, and feats of Magic, were outdone. But unhappily we have not such a Hat; and man, poor fool that he is, can seldom and scantily help himself without one.

"Were it not wonderful, for instance, had Orpheus, or Amphion, built the walls of Thebes by the mere sound of his Lyre? Yet tell me, Who built these walls of Weissnichtwo; summoning out all the sandstone rocks, to dance along from the *Steinbruch* (now a huge Troglodyte Chasm, with frightful green-mantled pools); and shape themselves into Doric and Ionic pillars, squared ashlar houses and noble streets? Was it not the still higher Orpheus, or Orpheuses, who, in past centuries, by the divine Music of Wisdom, succeeded in civilising Man? Our highest Orpheus walked in Judea, eighteen hundred years ago: his sphere-melody, flowing in wild native tones, took captive the ravished souls of men; and, being of a truth sphere-melody, still flows and sounds, though now with thousandfold accompaniments, and rich symphonies, through all our hearts; and modulates, and divinely leads them. Is that a wonder, which happens in two hours; and does it cease to be wonderful if happening in two million? Not only was Thebes built by the music of an Orpheus; but without the music of some inspired Orpheus was no city ever built, no work that man glories in ever done.

"Sweep away the Illusion of Time; glance, if thou have eyes, from the near moving-cause to its far-distant Mover: The stroke that came transmitted through a whole galaxy of elastic balls, was it less a stroke than if the last ball only had been struck, and sent flying? O, could I (with the Time-annihilating Hat) transport thee direct from the Beginnings to the Endings, how were thy eyesight unsealed, and thy heart set flaming in the Light-sea of celestial

wonder! Then sawest thou that this fair Universe, were it in the meanest province thereof, is in very deed the star-domed City of God; that through every star, through every grass-blade, and most through every Living Soul, the glory of a present God still beams. But Nature, which is the Time-vesture of God, and reveals Him to the wise, hides Him from the foolish.

"Again, could anything be more miraculous than an actual authentic Ghost? The English Johnson longed, all his life, to see one; but could not, though he went to Cock Lane, and thence to the church-vaults, and tapped on coffins. Foolish Doctor! Did he never, with the mind's eye as well as with the body's, look round him into that full tide of human Life he so loved; did he never so much as look into Himself? The good Doctor was a Ghost, as actual and authentic as heart could wish; well-nigh a million of Ghosts were travelling the streets by his side. Once more I say, sweep away the illusion of Time; compress the threescore years into three minutes: what else was he, what else are we? Are we not Spirits, that are shaped into a body, into an Appearance; and that fade away again into air and Invisibility? This is no metaphor, it is a simple scientific *fact*; we start out of Nothingness, take figure, and are Apparitions; round us, as round the veriest spectre, is Eternity; and to Eternity minutes are as years and æons. Come there not tones of Love and Faith, as from celestial harp-strings, like the Song of beatified Souls? And again, do not we squeak and gibber (in our discordant, screech-owlish debatings and recriminatings); and glide bodeful, and feeble, and fearful; or uproar (*poltern*), and revel in our mad Dance of the Dead,—till the scent of the morning-air summons us to our still Home; and dreamy Night becomes awake and Day? Where now is Alexander of Macedon: does the steel Host, that yelled in fierce battle-shouts at Issus and Arbela, remain behind him; or have they all vanished utterly, even as perturbed Goblins must? Napoleon too, and his Moscow Retreats and Austerlitz Campaigns! Was it all other than the veriest Spectre-hunt; which has now, with its howling tumult that made Night hideous, flitted away?—Ghosts! There are nigh a thousand-million walking the Earth openly at noontide; some half-hundred have vanished from it, some half-hundred have arisen in it, ere thy watch ticks once.

" O Heaven, it is mysterious, it is awful to consider that we not only carry each a future Ghost within him; but are, in very deed, Ghosts! These Limbs, whence had we them; this stormy Force; this life-blood with its burning Passion? They are dust and shadow; a Shadow-system gathered round our ME; wherein, through some moments or years, the Divine Essence is to be revealed in the Flesh. That warrior on his strong war-horse, fire flashes through his eyes; force dwells in his arm and heart: but warrior and war-horse are a vision; a revealed Force, nothing more. Stately they tread the Earth, as if it were a firm substance: fool! the Earth is but a film; it cracks in twain, and warrior and war-horse sink beyond plummet's sounding. Plummet's? Fantasy herself will not follow them. A little while ago, they were not; a little while, and they are not, their very ashes are not.

" So has it been from the beginning, so will it be to the end. Generation after generation takes to itself the Form of a Body; and forth-issuing from Cimmerian Night, on Heaven's mission APPEARS. What Force and Fire is in each he expends: one grinding in the mill of Industry; one hunter-like climbing the giddy Alpine heights of Science; one madly dashed in pieces on the rocks of Strife, in war with his fellow:—and then the Heaven-sent is recalled; his earthly Vesture falls away, and soon even to Sense becomes a vanished Shadow. Thus, like some wild-flaming, wild-thundering train of Heaven's Artillery, does this mysterious MANKIND thunder and flame, in long-drawn, quick-succeeding grandeur, through the unknown Deep. Thus, like a God-created, fire-breathing Spirit-host, we emerge from the Inane; haste stormfully across the astonished Earth; then plunge again into the Inane. Earth's mountains are levelled, and her seas filled up, in our passage: can the Earth, which is but dead and a vision, resist Spirits which have reality and are alive? On the hardest adamant some footprint of us is stamped-in; the last Rear of the host will read traces of the earliest Van. But whence?—O Heaven, whither? Sense knows not; Faith knows not; only that it is through Mystery to Mystery, from God and to God.

> " 'We *are such stuff*
> As Dreams are made of, and our little Life
> Is rounded with a sleep!' "

From
THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

[1837]

PART III

THE GUILLOTINE

BOOK II

REGICIDE

CHAPTER VIII

PLACE DE LA RÉVOLUTION

To this conclusion then, hast thou come, O hapless Louis! The Son of Sixty Kings is to die on the Scaffold by form of Law. Under Sixty Kings this same form of Law, form of Society, has been fashioning itself together, these thousand years; and has become, one way and other, a most strange Machine. Surely, if needful, it is also frightful, this Machine; dead, blind; not what it should be; which, with swift stroke, or by cold slow torture, has wasted the lives and souls of innumerable men. And behold now a King himself, or say rather Kinghood in his person, is to expire here in cruel tortures;—like a Phalaris shut in the belly of his own red-heated Brazen Bull! It is ever so; and thou shouldst know it, O haughty tyrannous man; injustice breeds injustice; curses and falsehoods do verily return "always *home*," wide as they may wander. Innocent Louis bears the sins of many generations: he too experiences that man's tribunal is not in this Earth; that if he had no Higher one, it were not well with him.

A King dying by such violence appeals impressively to the imagination ; as the like must do, and ought to do. And yet at bottom it is not the King dying, but the man ! Kingship is a coat : the grand loss is of the skin. The man from whom you take his Life, to him can the whole combined world do *more* ? Lally went on his hurdle ; his mouth filled with a gag. Miserablest mortals, doomed for picking pockets, have a whole five-act Tragedy in them, in that dumb pain, as they go to the gallows, unregarded ; they consume the cup of trembling down to the lees. For Kings and for Beggars, for the justly doomed and the unjustly, it is a hard thing to die. Pity them all : thy utmost pity, with all aids and appliances and throne-and-scaffold contrasts, how far short is it of the thing pitied !

A Confessor has come ; Abbé Edgeworth, of Irish extraction, whom the King knew by good report, has come promptly on this solemn mission. Leave the Earth alone, then, thou hapless King ; it with its malice will go its way, thou also canst go thine. A hard scene yet remains : the parting with our loved ones. Kind hearts, environed in the same grim peril with us ; to be left *here* ! Let the Reader look with the eyes of Valet Cléry, through these glass-doors, where also the Municipality watches ; and see the cruellest of scenes :

" At half-past eight, the door of the ante-room opened : the Queen appeared first, leading her Son by the hand ; then Madame Royale and Madame Elizabeth : they all flung themselves into the arms of the King. Silence reigned for some minutes ; interrupted only by sobs. The Queen made a movement to lead his Majesty towards the inner room, where M. Edgeworth was waiting unknown to them : ' No,' said the King, ' let us go into the dining-room ; it is there only that I can see you.' They entered there ; I shut the door of it, which was of glass. The King sat down, the Queen on his left hand, Madame Elizabeth on his right, Madame Royale almost in front ; the young Prince remained standing between his Father's legs. They all leaned towards him, and often held him embraced. This scene of woe lasted an hour and three quarters ; during which we could hear nothing ; we could see only that always when the King spoke, the sobbings of the Princesses redoubled, continued for some minutes ; and that then the King began again to speak."—And so our meetings and

our partings do now end! The sorrows we gave each other; the poor joys we faithfully shared, and all our lovings and our sufferings, and confused toilings under the earthly Sun, are over. Thou good soul, I shall never, never through all ages of Time, see thee any more!—NEVER! O Reader, knowest thou that hard word?

For nearly two hours this agony lasts; then they tear themselves asunder. "Promise that you will see us on the morrow." He promises:—Ah yes, yes; yet once; and go now, ye loved ones; cry to God for yourselves and me!—It was a hard scene, but it is over. He will not see them on the morrow. The Queen, in passing through the ante-room, glanced at the Cerberus Municipals; and, with woman's vehemence, said through her tears, "*Vous êtes tous des scélérats.*"

King Louis slept sound, till five in the morning, when Cléry, as he had been ordered, awoke him. Cléry dressed his hair: while this went forward, Louis took a ring from his watch, and kept trying it on his finger; it was his wedding-ring, which he is now to return to the Queen as a mute farewell. At half-past six, he took the Sacrament; and continued in devotion, and conference with Abbé Edgeworth. He will not see his Family: it were too hard to bear.

At eight, the Municipals enter: the King gives them his Will, and messages and effects; which they, at first, brutally refuse to take charge of: he gives them a roll of gold pieces, a hundred and twenty-five louis; these are to be returned to Malesherbes, who had lent them. At nine, Santerre says the hour is come. The King begs yet to retire for three minutes. At the end of three minutes, Santerre again says the hour is come. "Stamping on the ground with his right-foot, Louis answers: '*Partons*, Let us go.'"—How the rolling of those drums comes in, through the Temple bastions and bulwarks, on the heart of a queenly wife; soon to be a widow! He is gone, then, and has not seen us? A Queen weeps bitterly; a King's Sister and Children. Over all these Four does Death also hover: all shall perish miserably save one; she, as Duchesse d'Angoulême, will live,—not happily.

At the Temple Gate were some faint cries, perhaps from voices of pitiful women: "*Grace! Grace!*" Through the rest of the streets there is silence as of the grave. No man not armed is allowed to be there: the armed, did any even pity, dare not express it, each man overawed by all his

neighbours. All windows are down, none seen looking through them. All shops are shut. No wheel-carriage rolls, this morning, in these streets but one only. Eighty-thousand armed men stand ranked, like armed statues of men; cannons bristle, cannoneers with match burning, but no word or movement: it is as a city enchanted into silence and stone: one carriage with its escort, slowly rumbling, is the only sound. Louis reads, in his Book of Devotion, the Prayers of the Dying: clatter of this death-march falls sharp on the ear, in the great silence; but the thought would fain struggle heavenward, and forget the Earth.

As the clocks strike ten, behold the Place de la Révolution, once Place de Louis Quinze: the Guillotine, mounted near the old Pedestal where once stood the Statue of that Louis! Far round, all bristles with cannons and armed men: spectators crowding in the rear; d'Orléans Égalité there in cabriolet. Swift messengers, *hoquetons*, speed to the Townhall, every three minutes: near by is the Convention sitting,—vengeful for Lepelletier. Heedless of all, Louis reads his Prayers of the Dying; not till five minutes yet has he finished; then the Carriage opens. What temper he is in? Ten different witnesses will give ten different accounts of it. He is in the collision of all tempers; arrived now at the black Mahlstrom and descent of Death: in sorrow, in indignation, in resignation struggling to be resigned. "Take care of M. Edgeworth," he straitly charges the Lieutenant who is sitting with them: then they two descend.

The drums are beating: "*Taisez-vous*, Silence!" he cries "in a terrible voice, *d'une voix terrible*." He mounts the scaffold, not without delay; he is in puce coat, breeches of gray, white stockings. He strips off the coat; stands disclosed in a sleeve-waistcoat of white flannel. The Executioners approach to bind him: he spurns, resists; Abbé Edgeworth has to remind him how the Saviour, in whom men trust, submitted to be bound. His hands are tied, his head bare; the fatal moment is come. He advances to the edge of the Scaffold, "his face very red," and says: "Frenchmen, I die innocent: it is from the Scaffold and near appearing before God that I tell you so. I pardon my enemies; I desire that France——" A General on horseback, Santerre or another, prances out, with uplifted hand: "*Tambours!*" The drums drown the voice. "Executioners, do your duty!" The Executioners, desperate lest

themselves be murdered (for Santerre and his Armed Ranks will strike, if they do not), seize the hapless Louis : six of them desperate, him singly desperate, struggling there ; and bind him to their plank. Abbé Edgeworth, stooping, bespeaks him : " Son of Saint Louis, ascend to Heaven." The Axe clanks down ; a King's Life is shorn away. It is Monday the 21st of January 1793. He was aged Thirty-eight years four months and twenty-eight days.

Executioner Samson shows the Head : fierce shout of *Vive la République* rises, and swells ; caps raised on bayonets, hats waving : students of the College of Four Nations take it up, on the far Quais ; fling it over Paris. D'Orléans drives off in his cabriolet : the Townhall Councillors rub their hands, saying. " It is done, It is done." There is dipping of handkerchiefs, of pike-points in the blood. Headsman Samson, though he afterwards denied it, sells locks of the hair : fractions of the puce coat are long after worn in rings.—And so, in some half-hour it is done ; and the multitude has all departed. Pastry-cooks, coffee-sellers, milkmen sing out their trivial quotidian cries : the world wags on, as if this were a common day. In the coffee-houses that evening, says Prudhomme, Patriot shook hands with Patriot in a more cordial manner than usual. Not till some days after, according to Mercier, did public men see what a grave thing it was.

A grave thing it indisputably is ; and will have consequences. On the morrow morning, Roland, so long steeped to the lips in disgust and chagrin, sends in his demission. His accounts lie all ready, correct in black-and-white to the uttermost farthing : these he wants but to have audited, that he might retire to remote obscurity, to the country and his books. They will never be audited, those accounts ; he will never get retired thither.

It was on Tuesday that Roland demitted. On Thursday comes Lepelletier St. Fargeau's Funeral, and passage to the Pantheon of Great Men. Notable as the wild pageant of a winter day. The Body is borne aloft, half-bare ; the winding-sheet disclosing the death-wound : sabre and bloody clothes parade themselves ; a " lugubrious music " wailing harsh *nænicæ*. Oak-crowns shower down from windows ; President Vergniaud walks there, with Convention, with Jacobin Society, and all Patriots of every colour, all mourning brotherlike.

Notable also for another thing this Burial of Lepelletier : it was the last act these men ever did with concert ! All Parties and figures of Opinion, that agitate this distracted France and its Convention, now stand, as it were, face to face, and dagger to dagger ; the King's Life, round which they all struck and battled, being hurled down. Dumouriez, conquering Holland, growls ominous discontent, at the head of Armies. Men say Dumouriez will have a King ; that young D'Orléans Égalité shall be his King. Deputy Fauchet, in the *Journal des Amis*, curses his day, more bitterly than Job did ; invokes the poniards of Regicides, of " Arras Vipers " or Robespierres, of Pluto Dantons, of horrid Butchers Legendre and Simulacra d'Herbois, to send him swiftly to another world than *theirs*. This is *Te-Deum* Fauchet, of the Bastille Victory, of the *Cercle Social*. Sharp was the death-hail rattling round one's Flag-of-truce, on that Bastille day : but it was soft to such wreckage of high Hope as this ; one's New Golden Era going down in leaden dross, and sulphurous black of the Everlasting Darkness !

At home this Killing of a King has divided all friends ; and abroad it has united all enemies. Fraternity of Peoples, Revolutionary Propagandism ; Atheism, Regicide ; total destruction of social order in this world ! All Kings, and lovers of Kings, and haters of Anarchy, rank in coalition ; as in a war for life. England signifies to Citizen Chauvelin, the Ambassador or rather Ambassador's-Cloak, that he must quit the country in eight days. Ambassador's-Cloak and Ambassador, Chauvelin and Talleyrand, depart accordingly. Talleyrand, implicated in that Iron Press of the Tuileries, thinks it safest to make for America.

England has cast out the Embassy : England declares war,—being shocked principally, it would seem, at the condition of the River Scheldt. Spain declares war ; being shocked principally at some other thing ; which doubtless the Manifesto indicates. Nay we find it was not England that declared war first, or Spain first ; but that France herself declared war first on both of them ;—a point of immense Parliamentary and Journalistic interest in those days, but which has become of no interest whatever in these. They all declare war. The sword is drawn, the scabbard thrown away. It is even as Danton said, in one of his all-too gigantic figures : " The coalised Kings threaten us ; we hurl at their feet, as gage of battle, the Head of a King."

BOOK IV

TERROR

CHAPTER I

CHARLOTTE CORDAY

Amid which dim ferment of Caen and the World, History specially notices one thing: in the lobby of the Mansion *de l'Intendance*, where busy Deputies are coming and going, a young Lady with an aged valet, taking grave graceful leave of Deputy Barbaroux. She is of stately Norman figure; in her twenty-fifth year; of beautiful still countenance; her name is Charlotte Corday, heretofore styled D'Armans, while Nobility still was. Barbaroux has given her a Note to Deputy Duperret,—him who once drew his sword in the effervescence. Apparently she will to Paris on some errand? "She was a Republican before the Revolution, and never wanted energy." A completeness, a decision is in this fair female Figure: "by energy she means the spirit that will prompt one to sacrifice himself for his country." What if she, this fair young Charlotte, had emerged from her secluded stillness, suddenly like a Star; cruel-lovely, with half-angelic, half-dæmonic splendour; to gleam for a moment, and in a moment be extinguished: to be held in memory, so bright-complete was she, through long centuries!—Quitting Cimmerian Coalitions without, and the dim-simmering Twenty-five millions within, History will look fixedly at this one fair Apparition of a Charlotte Corday; will note whither Charlotte moves, how the little Life burns forth so radiant, then vanishes swallowed of the Night.

With Barbaroux's Note of Introduction, and slight stock

of luggage, we see Charlotte on Tuesday the 9th of July seated in the Caen Diligence, with a place for Paris. None takes farewell of her, wishes her Good-journey: her Father will find a line left, signifying that she is gone to England, that he must pardon her, and forget her. The drowsy Diligence lumbers along; amid drowsy talk of Politics, and praise of the Mountain; in which she mingles not: all night, all day, and again all night. On Thursday, not long before noon, we are at the bridge of Neuilly; here is Paris with her thousand black domes, the goal and purpose of thy journey! Arrived at the Inn de la Providence in the Rue des Vieux Augustins, Charlotte demands a room; hastens to bed; sleeps all afternoon and night, till the morrow morning.

On the morrow morning, she delivers her Note to Duperret. It related to certain Family Papers which are in the Minister of the Interior's hand; which a Nun at Caen, an old Convent-friend of Charlotte's, has need of; which Duperret shall assist her in getting: this then was Charlotte's errand to Paris? She has finished this, in the course of Friday;—yet says nothing of returning. She has seen and silently investigated several things. The Convention, in bodily reality, she has seen; what the Mountain is like. The living physiognomy of Marat she could not see; he is sick at present, and confined to home.

About eight on the Saturday morning, she purchases a large sheath-knife in the Palais Royal; then straightway, in the Place des Victoires, takes a hackney-coach: "To the Rue de l'École de Médecine, No. 44." It is the residence of the Citoyen Marat!—The Citoyen Marat is ill, and cannot be seen; which seems to disappoint her much. Her business is with Marat, then? Hapless beautiful Charlotte; hapless squalid Marat! From Caen in the utmost West, from Neuchâtel, in the utmost East, they two are drawing nigh each other; they two have, very strangely, business together.—Charlotte, returning to her Inn, despatches a short Note to Marat; signifying that she is from Caen, the seat of rebellion; that she desires earnestly to see him, and "will put it in his power to do France a great service." No answer. Charlotte writes another Note, still more pressing; sets out with it by coach, about seven in the evening, herself. Tired day-labourers have again finished their Week; huge Paris is circling and simmering, manifold, according to its vague wont: this one fair Figure has decision in it; drives straight,—towards a purpose.

It is yellow July evening, we say, the thirteenth of the month; eve of the Bastille day,—when "M. Marat," four years ago, in the crowd of the Pont Neuf, shrewdly required of that Besenval Hussar-party, which had such friendly dispositions, "to dismount, and give up their arms, then;" and became notable among Patriot men. Four years: what a road he has travelled;—and sits now, about half-past seven of the clock, stewing in slipper-bath; sore afflicted; ill of Revolution Fever,—of what other malady this History had rather not name. Excessively sick and worn, poor man: with precisely elevenpence-halfpenny of ready-money, in paper; with slipper-bath; strong three-footed stool for writing on, the while; and a squalid—Washerwoman, one may call her: that is his civic establishment in Medical-School Street; thither and not else-whither has his road led him. Not to the reign of Brotherhood and Perfect Felicity; yet surely on the way towards that?—Hark, a rap again! A musical woman's voice, refusing to be rejected: it is the Citoyenne who would do France a service. Marat, recognising from within, cries, Admit her. Charlotte Corday is admitted.

Citoyen Marat, I am from Caen the seat of rebellion, and wished to speak with you.—Be seated, *mon enfant*. Now what are the Traitors doing at Caen? What Deputies are at Caen?—Charlotte names some Deputies. "Their heads shall fall within a fortnight," croaks the eager People's-friend, clutching his tablets to write: *Barbaroux, Pétion*, writes he with bare shrunk arm, turning aside in the bath: *Pétion*, and *Louvet*, and—Charlotte has drawn her knife from the sheath; plunges it, with one sure stroke, into the writer's heart. "*A moi, chère amie*, Help, dear!" no more could the Death-choked say or shriek. The helpful Washerwoman running in, there is no Friend of the People, or Friend of the Washerwoman left; but his life with a groan gushes out, indignant, to the shades below.

And so Marat People's-friend is ended; the lone Stylites has got hurled down suddenly from his Pillar,—*whitherward* He that made him knows. Patriot Paris may sound triple and tenfold, in dole and wail; re-echoed by Patriot France; and the Convention, "Chabot pale with terror, declaring that they are to be all assassinated," may decree him Pantheon Honours, Public Funeral, Mirabeau's dust making way for him; and Jacobin Societies, in lamentable oratory, summing up his character, parallel him to One, whom they

think it honour to call " the good Sansculotte,"—whom we name not here ; also a Chapel may be made, for the urn that holds his Heart, in the Place du Carrousel ; and new-born children be named Marat ; and Lago-di-Como Hawkers bake mountains of stucco into unbeautiful Busts ; and David paint his Picture, or Death-Scene ; and such other Apotheosis take place as the human genius, in these circumstances, can devise : but Marat returns no more to the light of this Sun. One sole circumstance we have read with clear sympathy, in the old *Moniteur* Newspaper : how Marat's Brother comes from Neuchâtel to ask of the Convention, " that the deceased Jean-Paul Marat's musket be given him." For Marat too had a brother and natural affections ; and was wrapt once in swaddling-clothes, and slept safe in a cradle like the rest of us. Ye children of men !—A sister of his, they say, lives still to this day in Paris.

As for Charlotte Corday, her work is accomplished ; the recompense of it is near and sure. The *chère amie*, and neighbours of the house, flying at her, she " overturns some movables," entrenches herself till the gendarmes arrive ; then quietly surrenders ; goes quietly to the Abbaye Prison : she alone quiet, all Paris sounding, in wonder, in rage or admiration, round her. Duperret is put in arrest, on account of her ; his Papers sealed,—which may lead to consequences. Fauchet, in like manner, though Fauchet had not so much as heard of her. Charlotte, confronted with these two Deputies, praises the grave firmness of Duperret, censures the dejection of Fauchet.

On Wednesday morning, the thronged Palais de Justice and Revolutionary Tribunal can see her face ; beautiful and calm : she dates it " fourth day of the Preparation of Peace." A strange murmur ran through the Hall, at sight of her ; you could not say of what character. Tinville has his indictments and tape-papers : the cutler of the Palais Royal will testify that he sold her the sheath-knife ; " All these details are needless," interrupted Charlotte ; " it is I that killed Marat." By whose instigation ?—" By no one's." What tempted you, then ? His crimes. " I killed one man," added she, raising her voice extremely (*extrêmement*), as they went on with their questions, " I killed one man to save a hundred thousand ; a villain to save innocents ; a savage wild beast to give repose to my country. I was a Republican before the Revolution ; I never wanted energy." There is therefore nothing to be said. The public gazes astonished :

the hasty limners sketch her features, Charlotte not disapproving: the men of law proceed with their formalities. The doom is Death as a murderess. To her Advocate she gives thanks; in gentle phrase, in high-flown classical spirit. To the Priest they send her she gives thanks; but needs not any shriving, any ghostly or other aid from him.

On this same evening therefore, about half-past seven o'clock, from the gate of the Conciergerie, to a City all on tiptoe, the fatal Cart issues; seated on it a fair young creature, sheeted in red smock of murderess; so beautiful, serene, so full of life; journeying towards death,—alone amid the World. Many take off their hats, saluting reverently; for what heart but must be touched? Others growl and howl. Adam Lux, of Mentz, declares that she is greater than Brutus; that it were beautiful to die with her: the head of this young man seems turned. At the Place de la Révolution, the countenance of Charlotte wears the same still smile. The executioners proceed to bind her feet; she resists, thinking it meant as an insult; on a word of explanation, she submits with cheerful apology. As the last act, all being now ready, they take the neckerchief from her neck; a blush of maidenly shame overspreads that fair face and neck; the cheeks were still tinged with it when the executioner lifted the severed head, to show it to the people. "It is most true," says Forster, "that he struck the cheek insultingly; for I saw it with my eyes: the Police imprisoned him for it."

In this manner have the Beautifullest and the Squalidest come in collision, and extinguished one another. Jean-Paul Marat and Marie-Anne Charlotte Corday both, suddenly, are no more. "Day of the Preparation of Peace?" Alas, how were peace possible or preparable, while, for example, the heart of lovely Maidens, in their convent-stillness, are dreaming not of Love-paradises, and the light of Life; but of Codrus'-sacrifices, and Death well-earned? That Twenty-five million hearts have got to such temper, this *is* the Anarchy; the soul of it lies in this: whereof not peace can be the embodiment! The death of Marat, whetting old animosities tenfold, will be worse than any life. O ye hapless Two, mutually extinctive, the Beautiful and the Squalid, sleep ye well,—in the Mother's bosom that bore you both!

This is the history of Charlotte Corday; most definite, most complete; angelic-dæmonic: like a Star! Adam

Lux goes home, half-delirious ; to pour forth his Apotheosis of her, in paper and print ; to propose that she have a statue with this inscription, *Greater than Brutus*. Friends represent his danger ; Lux is reckless ; thinks it were beautiful to die with her.

BOOK VI

THERMIDOR

CHAPTER II

DANTON, NO WEAKNESS

DANTON, meanwhile, has been pressingly sent for from Arcis: he must return instantly, cried Camille, cried Phélippeaux and Friends, who scented danger in the wind. Danger enough! A Danton, a Robespierre, chief-products of a victorious Revolution, are now arrived in immediate front of one another; must ascertain how they will live together, rule together. One conceives easily the deep mutual incompatibility that divided these two: with what terror of feminine hatred the poor sea-green Formula looked at the monstrous colossal Reality, and grew greener to behold him;—the Reality, again, struggling to think no ill of a chief-product of the Revolution; yet feeling at bottom that such chief-product was little other than a chief windbag, blown large by Popular air; not a man, with the heart of a man, but a poor spasmodic incorruptible pedant, with a logic-formula instead of heart; of Jesuit or Methodist-Parson nature; full of sincere-cant, incorruptibility, of virulence, poltroonery; barren as the eastwind! Two such chief-products are too much for one Revolution.

Friends, trembling at the results of a quarrel on their part, brought them to meet. "It is right," said Danton, swallowing much indignation, "to repress the Royalists: but we should not strike except where it is useful to the Republic; we should not confound the innocent and the guilty."—"And who told you," replied Robespierre with a poisonous look, "that one innocent person had perished?"—"*Quoi*," said Danton, turning round to Friend Pâris self-named Fabricius, Juryman in the Revolutionary Tribunal: "*Quoi*,

not one innocent? What sayest thou of it, Fabricius?" —Friends, Westermann, this Pâris and others urged him to show himself, to ascend the Tribune and act. The man Danton was not prone to show himself; to act, or uproar for his own safety. A man of careless, large, hoping nature; a large nature that could rest: he would sit whole hours, they say, hearing Camille talk, and liked nothing so well. Friends urged him to fly; his Wife urged him: "Whither fly?" answered he: "If freed France cast me out, there are only dungeons for me elsewhere. One carries not his country with him at the sole of his shoe!" The man Danton sat still. Not even the arrestment of Friend Hérault, a member of *Salut*, yet arrested by *Salut*, can rouse Danton.—On the night of the 30th of March Juryman Pâris came rushing in; haste looking through his eyes: A clerk of the *Salut* Committee had told him Danton's warrant was made out, he is to be arrested this very night! Entreaties there are and trepidation, of poor Wife, of Pâris and Friends: Danton sat silent for a while; then answered, "*Ils n'oseraient*, They dare not;" and would take no measures. Murmuring "They dare not," he goes to sleep as usual.

And yet, on the morrow morning, strange rumour spreads over Paris City: Danton, Camille, Phélippeaux, Lacroix have been arrested overnight! It is verily so: the corridors of the Luxembourg were all crowded, Prisoners crowding forth to see this giant of the Revolution enter among them. "Messieurs," said Danton politely, "I hoped soon to have got you all out of this: but here I am myself; and one sees not where it will end."—Rumour may spread over Paris: the Convention clusters itself into groups, wide-eyed, whispering, "Danton arrested!" Who then is safe? Legendre, mounting the Tribune, utters, at his own peril, a feeble word for him; moving that he be heard at that Bar before indictment; but Robespierre frowns him down: "Did you hear Chabot, or Bazire? Would you have two weights and measures?" Legendre cowers low: Danton, like the others, must take his doom.

Danton's Prison-thoughts were curious to have; but are not given in any quantity: indeed few such remarkable men have been left so obscure to us as this Titan of the Revolution. He was heard to ejaculate: "This time twelvemonth, I was moving the creation of that same Revolutionary Tribunal. I crave pardon for it of God and man. They

are all Brothers Cain ; Brissot would have had me guillotined as Robespierre now will. I leave the whole business in a frightful welter (*gâchis épouvantable*) : not one of them understands anything of government. Robespierre will follow me ; I drag down Robespierre. O, it were better to be a poor fisherman than to meddle with governing of men." —Camille's young beautiful Wife, who had made him rich not in money alone, hovers round the Luxembourg, like a disembodied spirit, day and night. Camille's stolen letters to her still exist ; stained with the marks of his tears. " I carry my head like a Saint-Sacrament ? " so Saint-Just was heard to mutter : " perhaps he will carry his like a Saint-Denis."

Unhappy Danton, thou still unhappier light Camille, once light *Procureur de la Lanterne*, ye also have arrived, then, at the Bourne of Creation, where, like Ulysses Polytlas at the limit and utmost Gades of his voyage, gazing into that dim Waste beyond Creation, a man does see *the Shade of his Mother*, pale, ineffectual ;—and days when his Mother nursed and wrapped him are all-too sternly contrasted with this day ! Danton, Camille, Hérault, Westermann, and the others, very strangely massed up with Bazires, Swindler Chabots, Fabre d'Églantines, Banker Freys, a most motley Batch, " *Fournée* " as such things will be called, stand ranked at the Bar of Tinville. It is the 2nd of April 1794. Danton has had but three days to lie in Prison ; for the time presses.

What is your name ? place of abode ? and the like, Fouquier asks ; according to formality. " My name is Danton," answers he ; " a name tolerably known in the Revolution : my abode will soon be Annihilation (*dans le Néant*) ; but I shall live in the Pantheon of History." A man will endeavour to say something forcible, be it by nature or not ! Hérault mentions epigrammatically that he " sat in this Hall, and was detested of Parlementeers." Camille makes answer, " My age is that of the *bon Sans-culotte Jésus* ; an age fatal to Revolutionists." O Camille, Camille ! And yet in that Divine Transaction, let us say, there did lie, among other things, the fatallest Reproof ever uttered here below to Worldly Right-honourableness ; " the highest fact," so devout Novalis calls it, " in the Rights of Man." Camille's real age, it would seem, is thirty-four. Danton is one year older.

Some five months ago, the Trial of the Twenty-two Girondins was the greatest that Fouquier had then done. But here is a still greater to do; a thing which tasks the whole faculty of Fouquier; which makes the very heart of him waver. For it is the voice of Danton that reverberates now from these domes; in passionate words, piercing with their wild sincerity, winged with wrath. Your best Witnesses he shivers into ruin at one stroke. He demands that the Committee-men themselves come as Witnesses, as Accusers; he "will cover them with ignominy." He raises his huge stature, he shakes his huge black head, fire flashes from the eyes of him,—piercing to all Republican hearts: so that the very Galleries, though we filled them by ticket, murmur sympathy; and are like to burst down, and raise the People, and deliver him! He complains loudly that he is classed with Chabots, with swindling Stock-jobbers; that his Indictment is a list of platitudes and horrors. "Danton hidden on the 10th of August?" reverberates he, with the roar of a lion in the toils: "where are the men that had to press Danton to show himself, that day? Where are these high-gifted souls of whom he borrowed energy? Let them appear, these Accusers of mine: I have all the clearness of my self-possession when I demand them. I will unmask the three shallow scoundrels," *les trois plats coquins*, Saint-Just, Couthon, Lebas, "who fawn on Robespierre, and lead him towards his destruction. Let them produce themselves here; I will plunge them into Nothingness, out of which they ought never to have risen." The agitated President agitates his bell; enjoins calmness, in a vehement manner: "What is it to thee how I defend myself?" cries the other: "the right of *dooming* me is thine always. The voice of a man speaking for his honour and his life may well drown the jingling of thy bell!" Thus Danton, higher and higher; till the lion-voice of him "dies away in his throat": speech will not utter what is in that man. The Galleries murmur ominously; the first day's Session is over.

O Tinville, President Herman, what will ye do? They have two days more of it, by strictest Revolutionary Law. The Galleries already murmur. If this Danton were to burst your meshwork!—Very curious indeed to consider. It turns on a hair: and what a Hoitytoity were *there*, Justice and Culprit changing places; and the whole History of France running changed! For in France there is this

Danton only that could still try to govern France. He only, the wild amorphous Titan ;—and perhaps that other olive-complexioned individual, the Artillery-Officer at Toulon, whom we left pushing his fortune in the South ?

On the evening of the second day, matters looking not better but worse and worse, Fouquier and Herman, distraction in their aspect, rush over to *Salut Public*. What is to be done ? *Salut Public* rapidly concocts a new Decree ; whereby if men "insult Justice," they may be "thrown out of the Debates." For indeed, withal, is there not "a Plot in the Luxembourg Prison" ? *Ci-devant* General Dillon, and others of the Suspect, plotting with Camille's Wife to distribute *assignats* ; to force the Prisons, overset the Republic ? Citizen Laflotte, himself Suspect but desiring enfranchisement, has reported said Plot for us :—a report that may bear fruit ! Enough, on the morrow morning, an obedient Convention passes this Decree. *Salut* rushes off with it to the aid of Tinville, reduced now almost to extremities. And so, *Hors de Débats*, Out of the Debates, ye insolents ! Policemen, do your duty ! In such manner, with a dead-lift effort, *Salut*, Tinville, Herman, Leroi *Dix-Août*, and all stanch jurymen setting heart and shoulder to it, the Jury becomes "sufficiently instructed" ; Sentence is passed, is sent by an Official, and torn and trampled on : *Death this day*. It is the 5th of April 1794. Camille's poor Wife may cease hovering about this Prison. Nay let her kiss her poor children ; and prepare to enter it, and to follow !—

Danton carried a high look in the Death-cart. Not so Camille : it is but one week, and all is so topsyturvied ; angel Wife left weeping ; love, riches, Revolutionary fame, left all at the Prison-gate ; carnivorous Rabble now howling round. Palpable, and yet incredible ; like a madman's dream ! Camille struggles and writhes ; his shoulders shuffle the loose coat off them, which hangs knotted, the hands tied : "Calm, my friend," said Danton ; "heed not that vile canaille (*laissez là cette vile canaille*)." At the foot of the Scaffold, Danton was heard to ejaculate : "O my Wife, my well-beloved, I shall never see thee more, then !" —but, interrupting himself : "Danton, no weakness !" He said to Hérault-Séchelles stepping forward to embrace him : "Our heads will meet *there*," in the Headsman's sack. His last words were to Samson the Headsman himself : "Thou wilt show my head to the people ; it is worth showing."

So passes, like a gigantic mass of valour, ostentation, fury, affection and wild revolutionary force and manhood, this Danton, to his unknown home. He was of Arcis-sur-Aube ; born of " good farmer-people " there. He had many sins ; but one worst sin he had not, that of Cant. No hollow Formalist, deceptive and self-deceptive, *ghastly* to the natural sense, was this ; but a very Man : with all his dross he was a Man ; fiery-real, from the great fire-bosom of Nature herself. He saved France from Brunswick ; he walked straight his own wild road, whither it led him. He may live for some generations in the memory of men.

CHAPTER VI

TO FINISH THE TERROR

It is very remarkable, indeed, that since the *Être-Suprême* Feast, and the sublime continued harangues on it, which Billaud feared would become a bore to him, Robespierre has gone little to Committee ; but held himself apart, as if in a kind of pet. Nay they have made a Report on that old Catherine Théot, and her Regenerative Man spoken of by the Prophets ; not in the best spirit. This Théot mystery they affect to regard as a Plot ; but have evidently introduced a vein of satire, of irreverent banter, not against the Spinster alone, but obliquely against her Regenerative Man ! Barrère's light pen was perhaps at the bottom of it : read through the solemn snuffling organs of old Vadier of the *Sûreté Générale*, the Théot Report had its effect ; wrinkling the general Republican visage into an iron grin. Ought these things to be ?

We note further, that among the Prisoners in the Twelve Houses of Arrest, there is one whom we have seen before—Senhora Fontenai, *born* Cabarus, the fair Proserpine whom Representative Tallien Pluto-like did gather at Bourdeaux, not without effect on himself ! Tallien is home, by recall, long since, from Bourdeaux ; and in the most alarming position. Vain that he sounded, louder even than ever, the note of Jacobinism, to hide past shortcomings : the Jacobins purged him out ; two times has Robespierre growled at him words of omen from the Convention Tribune. And now his fair Cabarus, hit by denunciation, lies Arrested, Suspect, in spite of all he could do !—Shut in horrid pinfold of death, the Senhora smuggles out to her red-gloomy Tallien the most pressing entreaties and conjurings : Save me ; save thyself. Seest thou not that thy own head is doomed ; thou with a too fiery audacity ; a Dantonist withal ; against whom lie grudges ? Are ye not all doomed, as in the Polyphemus Cavern : the fawningest slave of you will be but eaten last !

—Tallien feels with a shudder that it is true. Tallien has had words of omen, Bourdon has had words, Fréron is hated and Barras : each man " feels his head if it yet stick on his shoulders."

Meanwhile Robespierre, we still observe, goes little to Convention, not at all to Committee ; speaks nothing except to his Jacobin House of Lords, amid his body-guard of *Tappe-durs*. These " forty-days," for we are now far in July, he has not showed face in Committee ; could only work there by his three shallow scoundrels, and the terror there was of him. The Incorruptible himself sits apart ; or is seen stalking in solitary places in the fields, with an intensely meditative air ; some say, " with eyes red-spotted," fruit of extreme bile : the lamentablest seagreen Chimera that walks the Earth that July ! O hapless Chimera, for thou too hadst a life, and heart of flesh,—what is this that the stern gods, seeming to smile all the way, have led and let thee to ! Art not thou he, who, few years ago, was a young Advocate of promise, and gave up the Arras Judgeship rather than sentence one man to die ?—

What his thoughts might be ? His plans for finishing the Terror ? One knows not. Dim vestiges there flit of Agrarian Law ; a victorious Sansculottism become Landed Proprietor ; old Soldiers sitting in National Mansions, in Hospital Palaces of Chambord and Chantilly ; peace bought by victory ; breaches healed by Feast of *Être Suprême* ;—and so, through seas of blood, to Equality, Frugality, worksome Blessedness, Fraternity, and Republic of the virtues. Blessed shore, of such a sea of Aristocrat blood : but how to land on it ? Through one last wave : blood of corrupt Sansculottists ; traitorous or semi-traitorous Conventionals, rebellious Talliens, Billauds, to whom with my *Être Suprême* I have become a bore ; with my Apocalyptic Old Woman a laughing-stock !—So stalks he, this poor Robespierre, like a seagreen ghost, through the blooming July. Vestiges of schemes flit dim. But *what* his schemes or his thoughts were will never be known to man.

New Catacombs, some say, are digging for a huge simultaneous butchery. Convention to be butchered, down to the right pitch, by General Henriot and Company : Jacobin House of Lords made dominant ; and Robespierre Dictator. There is actually, or else there is not actually, a List made out ; which the Hairdresser has got eye on, as he frizzled the Incorruptible locks. Each man asks himself, Is it I ?

Nay, as Tradition and rumour of Anecdote still convey it, there was a remarkable bachelor's dinner, one hot day, at Barrère's. For doubt not, O Reader, this Barrère and others of them gave dinners; had "country-house at Clichy," with elegant enough sumptuosities, and pleasures high-rouged. But at this dinner we speak of, the day being so hot, it is said, the guests all stript their coats, and left them in the drawing-room: from the dinner-table Carnot glided out, driven by a necessity, needing of all things paper; groped in Robespierre's pocket; found a list of Forty, his own name among them; and tarried not at the wine-cup that day!—Ye must bestir yourselves, O Friends; ye dull Frogs of the Marsh, mute ever since Girondism sank under, even you now must croak or die! Councils are held, with word and beck; nocturnal, mysterious as death. Does not a feline Maximilien stalk there; voiceless as yet; his green eyes red-spotted; back bent, and hair up? Rash Tallien, with his rash temper and audacity of tongue; he shall *bell the cat.* Fix a day; and be it soon, lest never!

Lo, before the fixed day, on the day which they call Eighth of Thermidor, 26th July 1794, Robespierre himself reappears in Convention; mounts to the Tribune! The biliary face seems clouded with new gloom: judge whether your Talliens, Bourdons, listened with interest. It is a voice bodeful of death or of life. Long-winded, unmelodious as the screech-owl's, sounds that prophetic voice: Degenerate condition of Republican spirit; corrupt Moderatism; *Sûreté, Salut* Committees themselves infected; backsliding on this hand and on that; I, Maximilien, alone left incorruptible, ready to die at a moment's warning. For all which what remedy is there? The Guillotine; new vigour to the all-healing Guillotine; death to traitors of every hue! So sings the prophetic voice; into its Convention sounding-board. The old song this: but today, O Heavens! has the sounding board ceased to act? There is not resonance in this Convention; there is, so to speak, a gasp of silence; nay a certain grating of one knows not what!—Lecointre, our old Draper of Versailles, in these questionable circumstances, sees nothing he can do so safe as rise, "insidiously" or not insidiously, and move, according to established wont, that the Robespierre Speech be "printed and sent to the Departments." Hark: gratings, even of dissonance! Honourable Members hint dissonance; Committee-Members, inculpated in the Speech, utter dissonance, demand "delay

in printing." Ever higher rises the note of dissonance; inquiry is even made by Editor Fréron: "What has become of the Liberty of Opinions in this Convention?" The Order to print and transmit, which had got passed, is rescinded. Robespierre, greener than ever before, has to retire, foiled; discerning that it is mutiny, that evil is nigh!

Mutiny is a thing of the fatallest nature in all enterprises whatsoever; a thing so incalculable, swift-frightful: not to be dealt with in *fright*. But mutiny in a Robespierre Convention, above all,—it is like fire seen sputtering in the ship's powder-room! One death-defiant plunge at it, this moment, and you may still tread it out: hesitate till next moment,—ship and ship's captain, crew and cargo are shivered far; the ship's voyage has suddenly ended between sea and sky. If Robespierre can, to-night, produce his Henriot and Company, and get his work done by them, he and Sansculottism may still subsist some time; if not, probably not. Oliver Cromwell, when that Agitator Sergeant stepped forth from the ranks, with plea of grievances, and began gesticulating and demonstrating, as the mouthpiece of Thousands expectant there,—discerned, with those truculent eyes of his, how the matter lay; plucked a pistol from his holsters; blew Agitator and Agitation instantly out. Noll was a man fit for such things.

Robespierre, for his part, glides over at evening to his Jacobin House of Lords; unfolds there, instead of some adequate resolution, his woes, his uncommon virtues, incorruptibilities; then, secondly, his rejected screech-owl Oration;—reads this latter over again; and declares that he is ready to die at a moment's warning. Thou shalt not die! shouts Jacobinism from its thousand throats. "Robespierre, I will drink the hemlock with thee," cries Painter David, "*Je boirai la cigue avec toi;*"—a thing not essential to *do*, but which, in the fire of the moment, can be said.

Our Jacobin sounding-board, therefore, does act! Applauses heaven-high cover the rejected Oration; fire-eyed fury lights all Jacobin features: Insurrection a sacred duty; the Convention to be purged; Sovereign People under Henriot and Municipality; we will make a new June-Second of it: To your tents, O Israel! In this key pipes Jacobinism; in sheer tumult of revolt. Let Tallien and all Opposition men make off. Collot d'Herbois, though of the supreme *Salut*, and so lately near shot, is elbowed, bullied;

is glad to escape alive. Entering Committee-room of *Salut*, all dishevelled, he finds sleek sombre Saint-Just there, among the rest; who in his sleek way asks, "What is passing at the Jacobins?"—"What is passing?" repeats Collot, in the unhistrionic Cambyses' vein: "What is passing? Nothing but revolt and horrors are passing. Ye want our lives; ye shall not have them." Saint-Just stutters at such Cambyses-oratory; takes his hat to withdraw. That *Report* he had been speaking of, Report on Republican Things in General we may say, which is to be read in Convention on the morrow, he cannot show it them, at this moment: a friend has it; he, Saint-Just, will get it, and send it, were he once home. Once home, he sends not it, but an answer that he will not send it; that they will hear it from the Tribune to-morrow.

Let every man, therefore, according to a well-known good-advice, "pray to Heaven, and keep his powder dry!" Paris, on the morrow, will see a thing. Swift scouts fly dim or invisible, all night, from *Sûreté* and *Salut*; from conclave to conclave; from Mother-Society to Townhall. Sleep, can it fall on the eyes of Talliens, Frérons, Collots? Puissant Henriot, Mayor Fleuriot, Judge Coffinhal, Procureur Payan, Robespierre and all the Jacobins are getting ready.

CHAPTER VII

GO DOWN TO

TALLIEN'S eyes beamed bright, on the morrow, Ninth of Thermidor "about nine o'clock," to see that the Convention had actually met. Paris is in rumour: but at least we are met, in Legal Convention here; we have not been snatched seriatim; treated with a *Pride's Purge* at the door. "*Allons*, brave men of the Plain," late Frogs of the Marsh! cried Tallien with a squeeze of the hand, as he passed in; Saint-Just's sonorous voice being now audible from the Tribune, and the game of games begun.

Saint-Just is verily reading that Report of his; green Vengeance, in the shape of Robespierre, watching nigh. Behold, however, Saint-Just has read but few sentences, when interruption rises, rapid *crescendo*; when Tallien starts to his feet, and Billaud, and this man starts and that, —and Tallien, a second time, with his: "Citoyens, at the Jacobins last night, I trembled for the Republic. I said to myself, if the Convention dare not strike the Tyrant, then I myself dare; and with this I will do it, if need be," said he, whisking out a clear-gleaming Dagger, and brandishing it there; the Steel of Brutus, as we call it. Whereat we all bellow, and brandish, impetuous acclaim. "Tyranny! Dictatorship! Triumvirate!" And the *Salut* Committee-men accuse, and all men accuse, and uproar, and impetuously acclaim. And Saint-Just is standing motionless, pale of face; Couthon ejaculating, "Triumvir?" with a look at his paralytic legs. And Robespierre is struggling to speak, but President Thuriot is jingling the bell against him, but the Hall is sounding against him like an Æolus-Hall: and Robespierre is mounting the Tribune-steps and descending again; going and coming, like to choke with rage, terror, desperation:—and mutiny is the order of the day!

O President Thuriot, thou that wert Elector Thuriot, and from the Bastille battlements sawest Saint-Antoine rising like the Ocean-tide, and hast seen much since, sawest thou ever the like of this? Jingle of bell, which thou jinglest against Robespierre, is hardly audible amid the Bedlam-storm; and men rage for life. "President of Assassins," shrieks Robespierre, "I demand speech of thee for the last time!" It cannot be had. "To you, O virtuous men of the Plain," cries he, finding audience one moment, "I appeal to you!" The virtuous men of the Plain sit silent as stones. And Thuriot's bell jingles, and the Hall sounds like Æolus's Hall. Robespierre's frothing lips are grown "blue"; his tongue dry, cleaving to the roof of his mouth. "The blood of Danton chokes him," cry they. "Accusation! Decree of Accusation!" Thuriot swiftly puts that question. Accusation passes; the incorruptible Maximilien is decreed Accused.

"I demand to share my Brother's fate, as I have striven to share his virtues," cries Augustin, the Younger Robespierre: Augustin also is decreed. And Couthon, and Saint-Just, and Lebas, they are all decreed; and packed forth,—not without difficulty, the Ushers almost trembling to obey. Triumvirate and Company are packed forth, into *Salut* Committee-room; their tongue cleaving to the roof of their mouth. You have but to summon the Municipality; to cashier Commandant Henriot, and launch Arrest at him; to regulate formalities; hand Tinville his victims. It is noon: the Æolus-Hall has delivered itself; blows now victorious, harmonious, as one irresistible wind.

And so the work is finished? One thinks so: and yet it is not so. Alas, there is yet but the first-act finished; three or four other acts still to come; and an uncertain catastrophe! A huge City holds in it so many confusions: seven hundred thousand human heads; not one of which knows what its neighbour is doing, nay not what itself is doing.—See, accordingly, about three in the afternoon, Commandant Henriot, how instead of sitting cashiered, arrested, he gallops along the Quais, followed by Municipal Gendarmes, "trampling down several persons!" For the Townhall sits deliberating, openly insurgent: Barriers to be shut; no Gaoler to admit any Prisoner this day;—and Henriot is galloping towards the Tuileries, to deliver Robespierre. On the Quai de la Ferraillerie, a young Citoyen, walking with his wife, says aloud: "Gendarmes, that man

is not your Commandant ; he is under arrest." The Gendarmes strike down the young Citoyen with the flat of their swords.

Representatives themselves (as Merlin the Thionviller), who accost him, this puissant Henriot flings into guard-houses. He bursts towards the Tuileries Committee-room, " to speak with Robespierre " : with difficulty, the Ushers and Tuileries Gendarmes, earnestly pleading and drawing sabre, seize this Henriot ; get the Henriot Gendarmes persuaded not to fight ; get Robespierre and Company packed into hackney-coaches, sent off under escort, to the Luxembourg and other Prisons. This, then, *is* the end ? May not an exhausted Convention adjourn now, for a little repose and sustenance, " at five o'clock " ?

An exhausted Convention did it ; and repented it. The end was not come ; only the end of the *second-act*. Hark, while exhausted Representatives sit at victuals,—tocsin bursting from all steeples, drums rolling, in the summer evening : Judge Coffinhal is galloping with new Gendarmes, to deliver Henriot from Tuileries Committee-room ; and does deliver him ! Puissant Henriot vaults on horseback ; sets to haranguing the Tuileries Gendarmes ; corrupts the Tuileries Gendarmes too ; trots off with them to Townhall. Alas, and Robespierre is not in Prison : the Gaoler showed his Municipal order, durst not, on pain of his life, admit any Prisoner ; the Robespierre Hackney-coaches, in this confused jangle and whirl of uncertain Gendarmes, have floated safe—into the Townhall ! There sit Robespierre and Company, embraced by Municipals and Jacobins in sacred right of Insurrection ; redacting Proclamations ; sounding tocsins ; corresponding with Sections and Mother-Society. Is not here a pretty enough third-act of a *natural* Greek Drama ; catastrophe more uncertain than ever ?

The hasty Convention rushes together again, in the ominous nightfall : President Collot, for the chair is his, enters with long strides, paleness on his face ; claps-on his hat ; says with solemn tone : " Citoyens, armed Villains have beset the Committee-rooms, and got possession of them. The hour is come, to die at our post ! " " *Oui*," answer one and all : " We swear it ! " It is no rodomontade, this time, but a sad fact and necessity ; unless we *do* at our posts, we must verily die. Swift therefore, Robespierre, Henriot, the Municipality, are declared Rebels ; put *Hors la Loi*, Out of Law. Better still, we appoint

Barras Commandant of what Armed-force is to be had; send Missionary Representatives to all Sections and quarters to preach, and raise force; will die at least with harness on our back.

What a distracted City; men riding and running, reporting and hearsaying; the Hour clearly in travail,—child not to be *named* till born! The poor Prisoners in the Luxembourg hear the rumour; tremble for a new September. They see men making signals to them, on skylights and roofs, apparently signals of hope; cannot in the least make out what it is. We observe, however, in the eventide, as usual, the Death-tumbrils faring Southeastward, through Saint-Antoine, towards their Barrier du Trône. Saint-Antoine's tough bowels melt; Saint-Antoine surrounds the Tumbrils; says, It shall not be. O Heavens, why should it! Henriot and Gendarmes, scouring the streets that way, bellow, with waved sabres, that it must. Quit hope, ye poor Doomed! The Tumbrils move on.

But in this set of Tumbrils there are two other things notable: one notable person; and one want of a notable person. The notable person is Lieutenant-General Loiserolles, a nobleman by birth and by nature; laying down his life here for his son. In the Prison of Saint-Lazare, the night before last, hurrying to the Grate to hear the Death-list read, he caught the name of his son. The son was asleep at the moment. "I am Loiserolles," cried the old man: at Tinville's bar, an error in the Christian name is little; small objection was made.—The want of the notable person, again, is that of Deputy Paine! Paine has sat in the Luxembourg since January; and seemed forgotten; but Fouquier had pricked him at last. The Turnkey, List in hand, is marking with chalk the outer doors of to-morrow's *Fournée*. Paine's outer door happened to be open, turned back on the wall; the Turnkey marked it on the side next him, and hurried on: another Turnkey came, and shut it; no chalk-mark now visible, the *Fournée* went without Paine. Paine's life lay not there.—

Our fifth-act, of this natural Greek Drama, with its natural unities, can only be painted in gross; somewhat as that antique Painter, driven desperate, did the *foam*. For through this blessed July night, there is clangour, confusion very great, of marching troops; of Sections going this way, Sections going that; of Missionary Representatives reading Proclamations by torchlight; Missionary Legendre, who

has raised force somewhere, emptying out the Jacobins, and flinging their key on the Convention table : " I have locked their door ; it shall be Virtue that reopens it." Paris, we say, is set against itself, rushing confused, as Ocean-currents do ; a huge Mahlstrom, sounding there, under cloud of night. Convention sits permanent on this hand ; Municipality most permanent on that. The poor prisoners hear tocsin and rumour ; strive to bethink them of the signals apparently of hope. Meek continual Twilight streaming up, which will be Dawn and a Tomorrow, silvers the Northern hem of Night ; it wends and wends there, that meek brightness, like a silent prophecy, along the great ring-dial of the Heaven. So still, eternal ! 'and on Earth all is confused shadow and conflict ; dissidence, tumultuous gloom and glare ; and " Destiny as yet sits wavering, and shakes her doubtful urn."

About three in the morning the dissident Armed Forces have *met*. Henriot's Armed Force stood ranked in the Place de Grève ; and now Barras's, which he has recruited, arrives there ; and they front each other, cannon bristling against cannon. Citoyens ! cries the voice of Discretion loudly enough, Before coming to bloodshed, to endless civil-war, hear the Convention Decree read : " Robespierre and all rebels Out of Law ! "—Out of Law ? There is terror in the sound. Unarmed Citoyens disperse rapidly home. Municipal Cannoneers, in sudden whirl, anxiously unanimous, range themselves on the Convention side, with shouting. At which shout, Henriot descends from his upper room, far gone in drink as some say ; finds his Place de Grève empty ; the cannons' mouth turned *towards* him ; and on the whole,—that it is now the catastrophe !

Stumbling in again, the wretched drunk-sobered Henriot announces : " All is lost ! " " *Misérable*, it is thou that hast lost it ! " cry they ; and fling him, or else he flings himself, out of window ; far enough down ; into mason-work and horror of cesspool ; not into death but worse. Augustin Robespierre follows him ; with the like fate. Saint-Just, they say, called on Lebas to kill him ; who would not. Couthon crept under a table ; attempting to kill himself ; not doing it.—On entering that Sanhedrim of Insurrection, we find all as good as extinct ; undone, ready for seizure. Robespierre was sitting on a chair, with pistol-shot blown through not his head but his under-jaw ; the suicidal hand had failed. With prompt zeal, not without

trouble, we gather these wrecked Conspirators; fish up even Henriot and Augustin, bleeding and foul; pack them all, rudely enough, into carts; and shall, before sunrise, have them safe under lock and key. Amid shoutings and embracings.

Robespierre lay in an anteroom of the Convention Hall, while his Prison-escort was getting ready; the mangled jaw bound up rudely with bloody linen: a spectacle to men. He lies stretched on a table, a deal-box his pillow; the sheath of the pistol is still clenched convulsively in his hand. Men bully him, insult him: his eyes still indicate intelligence; he speaks no word. He had on the sky-blue coat he had got made for the Feast of the *Être Suprême*—O Reader, can thy hard heart hold out against that? His trousers were nankeen; the stockings had fallen down over the ankles. He spake no word more in this world.

And so, at six in the morning, a victorious Convention adjourns. Report flies over Paris as on golden wings; penetrates the Prisons; irradiates the faces of those that were ready to perish; turnkeys and *moutons*, fallen from their high estate, look mute and blue. It is the 28th day of July, called 10th of Thermidor, year 1794.

Fouquier had but to identify; his Prisoners being already Out of Law. At four in the afternoon, never before were the streets of Paris seen so crowded. From the Palais de Justice to the Place de la Révolution, for *thither* again go the Tumbrils this time, it is one dense stirring mass; all windows crammed; the very roofs and ridge-tiles budding forth human Curiosity, in strange gladness. The Death-tumbrils, with their motley Batch of Outlaws, some Twenty-three or so, from Maximilien to Mayor Fleuriot and Simon the Cordwainer, roll on. All eyes are on Robespierre's Tumbril, where he, his jaw bound in dirty linen, with his half-dead Brother and half-dead Henriot, lie shattered; their "seventeen hours" of agony about to end. The Gendarmes point their swords at him, to show the people which is he. A woman springs on the Tumbril; clutching the side of it with one hand, waving the other Sibyl-like; and exclaims: "The death of thee gladdens my very heart, *m'enivre de joie;*" Robespierre opened his eyes; "*Scélérat*, go down to Hell, with the curses of all wives and mothers!"—At the foot of the scaffold, they stretched him on the ground till his turn came. Lifted aloft, his eyes again opened; caught the bloody axe. Samson wrenched the coat off him; wrenched

the dirty linen from his jaw : the jaw fell powerless, there burst from him a cry ; hideous to hear and see. Samson, thou canst not be too quick.

Samson's work done, there bursts forth shout on shout of applause. Shout, which prolongs itself not only over Paris, but over France, but over Europe, and down to this generation. Deservedly, and also undeservedly. O unhappiest Advocate of Arras, wert thou worse than other Advocates ? Stricter man, according to his Formula, to his Credo and his Cant, of probities, benevolences, pleasures-of-virtue, and such like, lived not in that age. A man fitted, in some luckier settled age, to have become one of those incorruptible barren Pattern-Figures, and have had marble-tablets and funeral-sermons. His poor landlord, the Cabinet-maker in the Rue Saint-Honoré, loved him ; his Brother died for him. May God be merciful to him and to us !

This is the end of the Reign of Terror ; new glorious *Revolution* named *of Thermidor* ; of Thermidor 9th, year 2 ; which being interpreted into old slave-style means 27th of July 1794. Terror is ended ; and death in the Place de la Révolution, were the " *Tail* of Robespierre " once executed ; which service Fouquier in large Batches is swiftly managing.

BOOK VII

VENDÉMIAIRE

CHAPTER VII

THE WHIFF OF GRAPESHOT

In fact, what can be more natural, one may say inevitable, as a Post-Sansculottic transitionary state, than even this? Confused wreck of a Republic of the Poverties, which ended in Reign of Terror, is arranging itself into such composure as it can. Evangel of Jean-Jacques, and most other Evangels, becoming incredible, what is there for it but return to the old Evangel of Mammon? *Contrat-Social* is true or untrue, Brotherhood is Brotherhood or Death; but money always will buy money's worth: in the wreck of human dubitations, this remains indubitable, that Pleasure is pleasant. Aristocracy of Feudal Parchment has passed away with a mighty rushing; and now, by a natural course, we arrive at Aristocracy of the Moneybag. It is the course through which all European Societies are, at this hour, travelling. Apparently a still baser sort of Aristocracy? An infinitely baser; the basest yet known.

In which, however, there is this advantage, that, like Anarchy itself, it cannot continue. Hast thou considered how Thought is stronger than Artillery-parks, and (were it fifty years after death and martyrdom, or were it two thousand years) writes and unwrites Acts of Parliament, removes mountains; models the World like soft clay? Also how the beginning of all Thought, worth the name, is Love; and the wise head never yet was, without first the generous heart? The Heavens cease not their bounty; they send us generous hearts into every generation. And now what generous heart can pretend to itself, or be hood-

winked into believing, that Loyalty to the Moneybag is a noble Loyalty? Mammon, cries the generous heart out of all ages and countries, is the basest of known Gods, even of known Devils. In him what glory is there, that ye should worship him? No glory discernible; not even terror: at best, detestability, ill-matched with despicability!—Generous hearts, discerning, on this hand, widespread Wretchedness, dark without and within, moistening its ounce-and-half of bread with tears; and, on that hand, mere Balls in flesh-coloured drawers, and inane or foul glitter of such sort,—cannot but ejaculate, cannot but announce: Too much, O divine Mammon; somewhat too much!—The voice of these, once announcing itself, carries *fiat* and *pereat* in it, for all things here below.

Meanwhile we will hate Anarchy as Death, which it is; and the things worse than Anarchy shall be hated *more*. Surely Peace alone is fruitful. Anarchy is destruction; a burning up, say, of Shams and Insupportabilities; but which leaves Vacancy behind. Know this also, that out of a World of Unwise nothing but an Unwisdom can be made. Arrange it, constitution-build it, sift it through ballot-boxes as thou wilt, it is and remains an Unwisdom,—the new prey of new quacks and unclean things, the latter end of it slightly better than the beginning. Who can bring a wise thing out of men unwise? Not one. And so Vacancy and general Abolition having come for this France, what can Anarchy do more? Let there be Order, were it under the Soldier's Sword; let there be Peace, that the bounty of the Heavens be not split; that what of Wisdom they do send us bring fruit in its season!—It remains to be seen how the quellers of Sansculottism were themselves quelled, and sacred right of Insurrection was blown away by gunpowder; wherewith this singular eventful History called *French Revolution* ends.

The Convention, driven such a course by wild wind, wild tide, and steerage and non-steerage, these three years, has become weary of its own existence, sees all men weary of it; and wishes heartily to finish. To the last it has to strive with contradictions: it is now getting fast ready with a Constitution, yet knows no peace. Sieyès, we say, is making the Constitution once more; has as good as made it. Warned by experience, the great Architect alters much, admits much. Distinction of Active and Passive Citizen,

that is, Money-qualification for Electors: nay Two Chambers, "Council of Ancients," as well as "Council of Five-hundred"; to that conclusion have we come! In a like spirit, eschewing that fatal self-denying ordinance of your Old Constituents, we enact not only that actual Convention Members are re-eligible, but that Two-thirds of them must be re-elected. The Active Citizen Electors shall for this time have free choice of only One-third of their National Assembly. Such enactment, of Two-thirds to be re-elected, we append to our Constitution; we submit our Constitution to the Townships of France, and say, Accept *both*, or reject both. Unsavoury as this appendix may be, the Townships, by the overwhelming majority, accept and ratify. With Directory of Five; with Two good Chambers, double-majority of them nominated by ourselves, one hopes this Constitution may prove final. *March* it will; for the legs of it, the re-elected Two-thirds, are already here, able to march. Sieyès looks at his paper-fabric with just pride.

But now see how the contumacious Sections, Lepelletier foremost, kick against the pricks! Is it not manifest infraction of one's Elective Franchise, Rights of Man, and Sovereignty of the People, this appendix of re-electing *your* Two-thirds? Greedy tyrants, who would perpetuate yourselves!—For the truth is, victory over Saint-Antoine, and long right of Insurrection, has spoiled these men. Nay spoiled all men. Consider, too, how each man was free to hope what he liked; and now there is to be no hope, there is to be fruition, fruition of *this*.

In men spoiled by long right of Insurrection, what confused ferments will rise, tongues once begun wagging! Journalists declaim, your Lacretelles, Laharpes; Orators spout. There is Royalism traceable in it, and Jacobinism. On the West Frontier, in deep secrecy, Pichegru, durst he trust his Army, is treating with Condé: in these Sections, there spout wolves in sheep's clothing, masked Emigrants and Royalists. All men, as we say, had hoped, each that the Election would do something for his own side: and now there is no Election, or only the third of one. Black is united with white against this clause of the Two-thirds; all the Unruly of France, who see their trade thereby near ending.

Section Lepelletier, after Addresses enough, finds that such clause is a manifest infraction; that it, Lepelletier for

one, will simply not conform thereto ; and invites all other free Sections to join it," in central Committee," in resistance to oppression. The Sections join it, nearly all ; strong with their Forty-thousand fighting men. The Convention therefore may look to itself ! Lepelletier, on this 12th day of Vendémiaire, 4th of October 1795, is sitting in open contravention, in its Convent of Filles Saint-Thomas, Rue Vivienne, with guns primed. The Convention has some Five-thousand regular troops at hand ; Generals in abundance ; and a Fifteen-hundred of miscellaneous persecuted Ultra-Jacobins, whom in this crisis it has hastily got together and armed, under the title *Patriots of Eighty-nine*. Strong in Law, it sends its General Menou to disarm Lepelletier.

General Menou marches accordingly, with due summons and demonstration ; with no result. General Menou, about eight in the evening, finds that he is standing ranked in the Rue Vivienne, emitting vain summonses ; with primed guns pointed out of every window at him ; and that he cannot disarm Lepelletier. He has to return, with whole skin, but without success ; and be thrown into arrest, as " a traitor." Whereupon the whole Forty-thousand join this Lepelletier which cannot be vanquished : to what hand shall a quaking Convention now turn ? Our poor Convention, after such voyaging, just entering harbour, so to speak, has *struck on the bar* ;—and labours there frightfully, with breakers roaring round it, Forty-thousand of them, like to wash it, and its Sieyès Cargo and the whole future of France, into the deep ! Yet one last time, it struggles, ready to perish.

Some call for Barras to be made Commandant ; he conquered in Thermidor. Some, what is more to the purpose, bethink them of the Citizen Buonaparte, unemployed Artillery-Officer, who took Toulon. A man of head, a man of action : Barras is named Commandant's-Cloak ; this young Artillery-Officer is named Commandant. He was in the Gallery at the moment, and heard it ; he withdrew, some half-hour, to consider with himself : after a half-hour of grim compressed considering, to be or not to be, he answers *Yea*.

And now, a man of head being at the centre of it, the whole matter gets vital. Swift, to Camp of Sablons ; to secure the Artillery, there are not twenty men guarding it ! A swift Adjutant, Murat is the name of him, gallops ; gets thither some minutes within time, for Lepelletier was also

on march that way : the Cannon are ours. And now beset this post, and beset that ; rapid and firm : at Wicket of the Louvre, in Cul-de-sac Dauphin, in Rue Saint-Honoré, from Pont-Neuf all along the north Quays, southward to Pont *ci-devant* Royal,—rank round the Sanctuary of the Tuileries, a ring of steel discipline ; let every gunner have his match burning, and all men stand to their arms !

Thus there is Permanent-session through the night ; and thus at sunrise of the morrow, there is seen sacred Insurrection once again : vessel of State labouring on the bar ; and tumultuous sea all round her, beating *générale*, arming and sounding,—not ringing tocsin, for we have left no tocsin but our own in the Pavilion of Unity. It is an imminence of shipwreck, for the whole world to gaze at. Frightfully she labours, that poor ship, within cable-length of port ; huge peril for her. However, she has a man at the helm. Insurgent messages, received and not received ; messenger admitted blindfolded ; counsel and counter-counsel : the poor ship labours !—Vendémiaire 13th, year 4 : curious enough, of all days, it is the Fifth day of October, anniversary of that Menad-march, six years ago ; by sacred right of Insurrection we are got thus far.

Lepelletier has seized the Church of Saint-Roch ; has seized the Pont-Neuf, our piquet there retreating without fire. Stray shots fall from Lepelletier ; rattle down on the very Tuileries Staircase. On the other hand, women advance dishevelled, shrieking, Peace ; Lepelletier behind them waving its hat in sign that we shall fraternise. Steady ! The Artillery-Officer is steady as bronze ; can, if need were, be quick as lightning. He sends eight-hundred muskets with ball-cartridges to the Convention itself ; honourable Members shall act with these in case of extremity : whereat they look grave enough. Four of the afternoon is struck. Lepelletier, making nothing by messengers, by fraternity or hat-waving, bursts out, along the Southern Quai Voltaire, along streets and passages, treble-quick, in huge veritable onslaught ! Whereupon, thou bronze Artillery-Officer—? "Fire !" say the bronze lips. And roar and thunder, roar and again roar, continual, volcano-like, goes his great gun, in the Cul-de-sac Dauphin against the Church of Saint-Roch ; go his great guns on the Pont-Royal ; go all his great guns ;—blow to air some two-hundred men, mainly about the Church of Saint-Roch ! Lepelletier cannot stand such horse-play ; no Sectioner can stand it : the Forty-

thousand yield on all sides, scour towards covert. "Some hundred or so of them gathered about the Théâtre de la République; but," says he, "a few shells dislodged them. It was all finished at six."

The Ship is *over* the bar, then; free she bounds shoreward,—amid shouting and vivats! Citoyen Buonaparte is "named General of the Interior, by acclamation"; quelled Sections have to disarm in such humour as they may; sacred right of Insurrection is gone forever! The Sieyès Constitution can disembark itself, and begin marching. The miraculous Convention Ship has got to land;—and is there, shall we figuratively say, changed, as Epic Ships are wont, into a kind of *Sea Nymph*, never to sail more; to roam the waste Azure, a Miracle in History!

"It is false," says Napoleon, "that we fired first with blank charge; it had been a waste of life to do that." Most false: the firing was with sharp and sharpest shot: to all men it was plain that here was no sport; the rabbets and plinths of Saint-Roch Church show splintered by it to this hour.—Singular: in old Broglie's time, six years ago, this Whiff of Grapeshot was promised; but it could not be given then; could not have profited then. Now, however, the time is come for it, and the man; and behold, you have it; and the thing we specifically call *French Revolution* is blown into space by it, and become a thing that was!—

THE HERO AS POET

HEROES AND HERO-WORSHIP

[1841]

LECTURE III

THE HERO AS POET. DANTE; SHAKSPEARE

[*Tuesday*, 12*th May* 1840]

The Hero as Divinity, the Hero as Prophet, are productions of old ages; not to be repeated in the new. They presuppose a certain rudeness of conception, which the progress of mere scientific knowledge puts an end to. There needs to be, as it were, a world vacant, or almost vacant of scientific forms, if men in their loving wonder are to fancy their fellow-man either a god or one speaking with the voice of a god. Divinity and Prophet are past. We are now to see our Hero in the less ambitious, but also less questionable, character of Poet; a character which does not pass. The Poet is a heroic figure belonging to all ages; whom all ages possess, when once he is produced, whom the newest age as the oldest may produce;—and will produce, always when Nature pleases. Let Nature send a Hero-soul; in no age is it other than possible that he may be shaped into a Poet.

Hero, Prophet, Poet,—many different names, in different times and places, do we give to Great Men; according to varieties we note in them, according to the sphere in which they have displayed themselves! We might give many more names, on this same principle. I will remark again, however, as a fact not unimportant to be understood, that the different *sphere* constitutes the grand origin of such distinction; that the Hero can be Poet, Prophet, King,

Priest or what you will, according to the kind of world he finds himself born into. I confess, I have no notion of a truly great man that could not be *all* sorts of men. The Poet who could merely sit on a chair, and compose stanzas, would never make a stanza worth much. He could not sing the Heroic warrior, unless he himself were at least a Heroic warrior too. I fancy there is in him the Politician, the Thinker, Legislator, Philosopher ;—in one or the other degree, he could have been, he is all these. So too I cannot understand how a Mirabeau, with that great glowing heart, with the fire that was in it, with the bursting tears that were in it, could not have written verses, tragedies, poems, and touched all hearts in that way, had his course of life and education led him thitherward. The grand fundamental character is that of Great Man ; that the man be great. Napoleon has words in him which are like Austerlitz Battles. Louis Fourteenth's Marshals are a kind of poetical men withal ; the things Turenne says are full of sagacity and geniality, like sayings of Samuel Johnson. The great heart, the clear deep-seeing eye : there it lies ; no man whatever, in what province soever, can prosper at all without these. Petrarch and Boccaccio did diplomatic messages, it seems, quite well : one can easily believe it ; they had done things a little harder than these ! Burns, a gifted song-writer, might have made a still better Mirabeau. Shakspeare,—one knows not what *he* could not have made, in the supreme degree.

True, there are aptitudes of Nature too. Nature does not make all great men, more than all other men, in the self-same mould. Varieties of aptitude doubtless ; but infinitely more of circumstance ; and far oftenest it is the *latter* only that are looked to. But it is as with common men in the learning of trades. You take any man, as yet a vague capability of a man, who could be any kind of craftsman ; and make him into a smith, a carpenter, a mason : he is then and thenceforth that and nothing else. And if, as Addison complains, you sometimes see a street-porter staggering under his load on spindle-shanks, and near at hand a tailor with the frame of a Samson handling a bit of cloth and small Whitechapel needle,—it cannot be considered that aptitude of Nature alone has been consulted here either !—The Great Man also, to what shall he be bound apprentice ? Given your Hero, is he to become Conqueror, King, Philosopher, Poet ? It is an inexplicably

complex controversial-calculation between the world and him! He will read the world and its laws; the world with its laws will be there to be read. What the world, on *this* matter, shall permit and bid is, as we said, the most important fact about the world.—

Poet and Prophet differ greatly in our loose modern notions of them. In some old languages, again, the titles are synonymous; *Vates* means both Prophet and Poet: and indeed at all times, Prophet and Poet, well understood, have much kindred of meaning. Fundamentally indeed they are still the same; in this most important respect especially, That they have penetrated both of them into the sacred mystery of the Universe; what Goethe calls "the open secret." "Which is the great secret?" asks one.—"The *open* secret,"—open to all, seen by almost none! That divine mystery, which lies everywhere in all Beings, "the Divine Idea of the World," that which lies at "the bottom of Appearance," as Fichte styles it; of which all Appearance, from the starry sky to the grass of the field, but especially the Appearance of Man and his work, is but the *vesture*, the embodiment that renders it visible. This divine mystery *is* in all times and in all places; veritably is. In most times and places it is greatly overlooked; and the Universe, definable always in one or the other dialect, as the realised Thought of God, is considered a trivial, inert, commonplace matter,—as if, says the Satirist, it were a dead thing, which some upholsterer had put together! It could do no good, at present, to *speak* much about this; but it is a pity for every one of us if we do not know it, live ever in the knowledge of it. Really a most mournful pity; —a failure to live at all, if we live otherwise!

But now, I say, whoever may forget this divine mystery, the *Vates*, whether Prophet or Poet, has penetrated into it; is a man sent hither to make it more impressively known to us. That always is his message; he is to reveal that to us, —that sacred mystery which he more than others lives ever present with. While others forget it, he knows it;—I might say, he has been driven to know it; without consent asked of *him*, he finds himself living in it, bound to live in it. Once more, here is no Hearsay, but a direct Insight and Belief; this man too could not help being a sincere man! Whosoever may live in the shows of things, it is for him a necessity of nature to live in the very fact of

things. A man once more, in earnest with the Universe, though all others were but toying with it. He is a *Vates*, first of all, in virtue of being sincere. So far Poet and Prophet, participators in the "open secret," are one.

With respect to their distinction again: The *Vates* Prophet, we might say, has seized that sacred mystery rather on the moral side, as Good and Evil, Duty and Prohibition; the *Vates* Poet on what the Germans call the æsthetic side, as Beautiful, and the like. The one we may call a revealer of what we are to do, the other of what we are to love. But indeed these two provinces run into one another, and cannot be disjoined. The Prophet too has his eye on what we are to love: how else shall he know what it is we are to do? The highest Voice ever heard on this earth said withal, "Consider the lilies of the field; they toil not, neither do they spin: yet Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." A glance, that, into the deepest deep of Beauty. "The lilies of the field,"—dressed finer than earthly princes, springing-up there in the humble furrow-field; a beautiful *eye* looking-out on you, from the great inner Sea of Beauty! How could the rude Earth make these, if her Essence, rugged as she looks and is, were not inwardly Beauty? In this point of view, too, a saying of Goethe's, which has staggered several, may have meaning: "The Beautiful," he intimates, "is higher than the Good; the Beautiful includes in it the Good." The *true* Beautiful; which however, I have said somewhere, "differs from the *false* as Heaven does from Vauxhall!" So much for the distinction and identity of Poet and Prophet.—

In ancient and also in modern periods we find a few Poets who are accounted perfect; whom it were a kind of treason to find fault with. This is noteworthy; this is right: yet in strictness it is only an illusion. At bottom, clearly enough, there is no perfect Poet! A vein of Poetry exists in the hearts of all men; no man is made altogether of Poetry. We are all poets when we *read* a poem well. The "imagination that shudders at the Hell of Dante," is not that the same faculty, weaker in degree, as Dante's own? No one but Shakspeare can embody, out of *Saxo Grammaticus*, the story of *Hamlet* as Shakspeare did: but every one models some kind of story out of it; every one embodies it better or worse. We need not spend time in defining. Where there is no specific difference, as between round and square, all definition must be more or less arbitrary. A man

that has *so* much more of the poetic element developed in him as to have become noticeable, will be called Poet by his neighbours. World-Poets too, those whom we are to take for perfect Poets, are settled by critics in the same way. One who rises *so* far above the general level of Poets will, to such and such critics, seem a Universal Poet; as he ought to do. And yet it is, and must be, an arbitrary distinction. All Poets, all men, have some touches of the Universal; no man is wholly made of that. Most Poets are very soon forgotten: but not the noblest Shakspeare or Homer of them can be remembered *forever*;—a day comes when he too is not!

Nevertheless, you will say, there must be a difference between true Poetry and true Speech not poetical: what is the difference? On this point many things have been written, especially by late German Critics, some of which are not very intelligible at first. They say, for example, that the Poet has an *infinitude* in him; communicates an *Unendlichkeit*, a certain character of "infinitude," to whatsoever he delineates. This, though not very precise, yet on so vague a matter is worth remembering: if well meditated, some meaning will gradually be found in it. For my own part, I find considerable meaning in the old vulgar distinction of Poetry being *metrical*, having music in it, being a Song. Truly, if pressed to give a definition, one might say this as soon as anything else: If your delineation be authentically *musical*, musical not in word only, but in heart and substance, in all the thoughts and utterances of it, in the whole conception of it, then it will be poetical; if not, not.—Musical: how much lies in that! A *musical* thought is one spoken by a mind that has penetrated into the inmost heart of the thing; detected the inmost mystery of it, namely the *melody* that lies hidden in it; the inward harmony of coherence which is its soul, whereby it exists, and has a right to be, here in this world. All inmost things, we may say, are melodious; naturally utter themselves in Song. The meaning of Song goes deep. Who is there that, in logical words, can express the effect music has on us? A kind of inarticulate unfathomable speech, which leads us to the edge of the Infinite, and lets us for moments gaze into that!

Nay all speech, even the commonest speech, has something of song in it: not a parish in the world but has its parish-accent;—the rhythm or *tune* to which the people

there *sing* what they have to say! Accent is a kind of chanting; all men have accent of their own,—though they only *notice* that of others. Observe too how all passionate language does of itself become musical,—with a finer music than the mere accent; the speech of a man even in zealous anger becomes a chant, a song. All deep things are Song. It seems somehow the very central essence of us, Song; as if all the rest were but wrappages and hulls! The primal element of us; of us, and of all things. The Greeks fabled of Sphere-Harmonies: it was the feeling they had of the inner structure of Nature; that the soul of all her voices and utterances was perfect music. Poetry, therefore, we will call *musical Thought*. The Poet is he who *thinks* in that manner. At bottom, it turns still on power of intellect; it is a man's sincerity and depth of vision that makes him a Poet. See deep enough, and you see musically; the heart of Nature *being* everywhere music, if you can only reach it.

The *Vates* Poet, with his melodious Apocalypse of Nature, seems to hold a poor rank among us, in comparison with the *Vates* Prophet; his function, and our esteem of him for his function, alike slight. The Hero taken as Divinity; the Hero taken as Prophet; then next the Hero taken only as Poet: does it not look as if our estimate of the Great Man, epoch after epoch, were continually diminishing? We take him first for a god, then for one god-inspired; and now in the next stage of it, his most miraculous word gains from us only the recognition that he is a Poet, beautiful verse-maker, man of genius, or suchlike!—It looks so; but I persuade myself that intrinsically it is not so. If we consider well, it will perhaps appear that in man still there is the *same* altogether peculiar admiration for the Heroic Gift, by what name soever called, that there at any time was.

I should say, if we do not now reckon a Great Man literally divine, it is that our notions of God, of the supreme unattainable Fountain of Splendour, Wisdom, and Heroism, are ever rising *higher*; not altogether that our reverence for these qualities, as manifested in our like, is getting lower. This is worth taking thought of. Sceptical Dilettantism, the curse of these ages, a curse which will not last forever, does indeed in this the highest province of human things, as in all provinces, make sad work; and our reverence for great men, all crippled, blinded, paralytic as it is, comes out in poor plight, hardly recognisable. Men worship the

shows of great men ; the most disbelieve that there is any reality of great men to worship. The dreariest, fatalest faith ; believing which, one would literally despair of human things. Nevertheless look, for example, at Napoleon ! A Corsican lieutenant of artillery ; that is the show of *him* : yet is he not obeyed, *worshipped* after his sort, as all the Tiaraed and Diademed of the world put together could not be ? High Duchesses, and ostlers of inns, gather round the Scottish rustic, Burns ;—a strange feeling dwelling in each that they never heard a man like this ; that, on the whole, this is the man ! In the secret heart of these people it still dimly reveals itself, though there is no accredited way of uttering it at present, that this rustic, with his black brows and flashing sun-eyes, and strange words moving laughter and tears, is of a dignity far beyond all others, incommensurable with all others. Do not we feel it so ? But now, were Dilettantism, Scepticism, Triviality, and all that sorrowful brood, cast-out of us,—as, by God's blessing, they shall one day be ; were faith in the shows of things entirely swept-out, replaced by clear faith in the *things*, so that a man acted on the impulse of that only, and counted the other non-extant ; what a new livelier feeling towards this Burns were it !

Nay here in these ages, such as they are, have we not two mere Poets, if not deified, yet we may say beatified ? Shakspeare and Dante are Saints of Poetry ; really, if we will think of it, *canonised* so that it is impiety to meddle with them. The unguided instinct of the world, working across all these perverse impediments, has arrived at such result. Dante and Shakspeare are a peculiar Two. They dwell apart, in a kind of royal solitude ; none equal, none second to them : in the general feeling of the world, a certain transcendentalism, a glory as of complete perfection, invests these two. They *are* canonised, though no Pope or Cardinals took hand in doing it ! Such, in spite of every perverting influence, in the most unheroic times, is still our indestructible reverence for heroism.—We will look a little at these Two, the Poet Dante and the Poet Shakspeare : what little it is permitted us to say here of the Hero as Poet will most fitly arrange itself in that fashion.

Many volumes have been written by way of commentary on Dante and his Book ; yet, on the whole, with no great result. His Biography is, as it were, irrecoverably lost for

us. An unimportant, wandering, sorrowstricken man, not much note was taken of him while he lived ; and the most of that has vanished, in the long space that now intervenes. It is five centuries since he ceased writing and living here. After all commentaries, the Book itself is mainly what we know of him. The Book ;—and one might add that Portrait commonly attributed to Giotto, which, looking on it, you cannot help inclining to think genuine, whoever did it. To me it is a most touching face ; perhaps of all faces that I know, the most so. Lonely there, painted as on vacancy, with the simple laurel wound round it ; the deathless sorrow and pain, the known victory which is also deathless ;—significant of the whole history of Dante ! I think it is the mournfulest face that ever was painted from reality ; an altogether tragic, heart-affecting face. There is in it, as foundation of it, the softness, tenderness, gentle affection as of a child ; but all this is as if congealed into sharp contradiction, into abnegation, isolation, proud hopeless pain. A soft ethereal soul looking-out so stern, implacable, grim-trenchant, as from imprisonment of thick-ribbed ice ! Withal it is a silent pain too, a silent scornful one : the lip is curled in a kind of godlike disdain of the thing that is eating-out his heart,—as if it were withal a mean insignificant thing, as if he whom it had power to torture and strangle were greater than it. The face of one wholly in protest, and life-long unsurrendering battle, against the world. Affection all converted into indignation : an implacable indignation ; slow, equable, silent, like that of a god ! The eye too, it looks-out as in a kind of *surprise*, a kind of inquiry, Why the world was of such a sort ? This is Dante : so he looks, this " voice of ten silent centuries," and sings us " his mystic unfathomable song."

The little that we know of Dante's Life corresponds well enough with this Portrait and this Book. He was born at Florence, in the upper class of society, in the year 1265. His education was the best then going ; much school-divinity, Aristotelean logic, some Latin classics,—no inconsiderable insight into certain provinces of things : and Dante, with his earnest intelligent nature, we need not doubt, learned better than most all that was learnable. He has a clear cultivated understanding, and of great subtlety ; this best fruit of education he had contrived to realise from these scholastics. He knows accurately and well what lies close to him ; but, in such a time, without

printed books or free intercourse, he could not know well what was distant: the small clear light, most luminous for what is near, breaks itself into singular *chiaroscuro* striking on what is far off. This was Dante's learning from the schools. In life, he had gone through the usual destinies; been twice out campaigning as a soldier for the Florentine State, been on embassy; had in his thirty-fifth year, by natural gradation of talent and service, become one of the Chief Magistrates of Florence. He had met in boyhood a certain Beatrice Portinari, a beautiful little girl of his own age and rank, and grown-up thenceforth in partial sight of her, in some distant intercourse with her. All readers know his graceful affecting account of this; and then of their being parted; of her being wedded to another, and of her death soon after. She makes a great figure in Dante's Poem; seems to have made a great figure in his life. Of all beings it might seem as if she, held apart from him, far apart at last in the dim Eternity, were the only one he had ever with his whole strength of affection loved. She died: Dante himself was wedded; but it seems not happily, far from happily. I fancy, the rigorous earnest man, with his keen excitabilities, was not altogether easy to make happy.

We will not complain of Dante's miseries: had all gone right with him as he wished it, he might have been Prior, Podestà, or whatsoever they call it, of Florence, well accepted among neighbours,—and the world had wanted one of the most notable words ever spoken or sung. Florence would have had another prosperous Lord Mayor; and the ten dumb centuries continued voiceless, and the ten other listening centuries (for there will be ten of them and more) had no *Divina Commedia* to hear! We will complain of nothing. A nobler destiny was appointed for this Dante; and he, struggling like a man led towards death and crucifixion, could not help fulfilling it. Give *him* the choice of his happiness! He knew not, more than we do, what was really happy, what was really miserable.

In Dante's Priorship, the Guelf-Ghibelline, Bianchi-Neri, or some other confused disturbances rose to such a height, that Dante, whose party had seemed the stronger, was with his friends cast unexpectedly forth into banishment; doomed thenceforth to a life of woe and wandering. His property was all confiscated and more; he had the fiercest feeling that it was entirely unjust, nefarious in the sight of God and man. He tried what was in him to get reinstated;

tried even by warlike surprisal, with arms in his hand : but it would not do ; bad only had become worse. There is a record, I believe, still extant in the Florence Archives, dooming this Dante, wheresoever caught, to be burnt alive. Burnt alive ; so it stands, they say : a very curious civic document. Another curious document, some considerable number of years later, is a letter of Dante's to the Florentine Magistrates, written in answer to a milder proposal of theirs, that he should return on condition of apologising and paying a fine. He answers, with fixed stern pride : "If I cannot return without calling myself guilty, I will never return, *nunquam revertar*."

For Dante there was now no home in this world. He wandered from patron to patron, from place to place ; proving, in his own bitter words, "How hard is the path, *Come è duro calle*." The wretched are not cheerful company. Dante, poor and banished, with his proud earnest nature, with his moody humours, was not a man to conciliate men. Petrarch reports of him that being at Can della Scala's court, and blamed one day for his gloom and taciturnity, he answered in no courtier-like way. Della Scala stood among his courtiers, with mimes and buffoons (*nebulones ac histriones*) making him heartily merry ; when turning to Dante, he said : "Is it not strange, now, that this poor fool should make himself so entertaining ; while you, a wise man, sit there day after day, and have nothing to amuse us with at all ?" Dante answered bitterly : "No, not strange ; your Highness is to recollect the Proverb, *Like to Like ;*"—given the amuser, the amusee must also be given ! Such a man, with his proud silent ways, with his sarcasms and sorrows, was not made to succeed at court. By degrees, it came to be evident to him that he had no longer any resting-place, or hope of benefit, in this earth. The earthly world had cast him forth, to wander, wander ; no living heart to love him now ; for his sore miseries there was no solace here.

The deeper naturally would the Eternal World impress itself on him ; that awful reality over which, after all, this Time-world, with its Florences and banishments, only flutters as an unreal shadow. Florence thou shalt never see : but Hell and Purgatory and Heaven thou shalt surely see ! What is Florence, Can della Scala, and the World and Life altogether ? ETERNITY : thither, of a truth, not elsewhither, art thou and all things bound ! The great soul of

Dante, homeless on earth, made its home more and more in that awful other world. Naturally his thoughts brooded on that, as on the one fact important for him. Bodied or bodiless, it is the one fact important for all men :—but to Dante, in that age, it was bodied in fixed certainty of scientific shape ; he no more doubted of that *Malebolge* Pool, that it all lay there with its gloomy circles, with its *alti guai*, and that he himself should see it, than we doubt that we should see Constantinople if we went thither. Dante's heart, long filled with this, brooding over it in speechless thought and awe, bursts forth at length into " mystic unfathomable song " ; and this his *Divine Comedy*, the most remarkable of all modern Books, is the result.

It must have been a great solacement to Dante, and was, as we can see, a proud thought for him at times, That he, here in exile, could do this work ; that no Florence, nor no man or men, could hinder him from doing it, or even much help him in doing it. He knew too, partly, that it was great ; the greatest a man could do. " If thou follow thy star, *Se tu segui tua stella*,"—so could the Hero, in his forsakenness, in his extreme need, still say to himself : " Follow thou thy star, thou shalt not fail of a glorious haven ! " The labour of writing, we find, and indeed could know otherwise, was great and painful for him ; he says, This Book, " which has made me lean for many years." Ah yes, it was won, all of it, with pain and sore toil,—not in sport, but in grim earnest. His Book, as indeed most good Books are, has been written, in many senses, with his heart's blood. It is his whole history, this Book. He died after finishing it ; not yet very old, at the age of fifty-six ; —broken-hearted rather, as is said. He lies buried in his death-city Ravenna : *Hic claudor Dantes patriis extorris ab oris*. The Florentines begged back his body, in a century after ; the Ravenna people would not give it. " Here am I Dante laid, shut-out from my native shores."

I said, Dante's Poem was a Song : it is Tieck who calls it " a mystic unfathomable Song " ; and such is literally the character of it. Coleridge remarks very pertinently somewhere, that wherever you find a sentence musically worded, of true rhythm and melody in the words, there is something deep and good in the meaning too. For body and soul, word and idea, go strangely together here as everywhere. Song : we said before, it was the Heroic of Speech ! All

old Poems, Homer's and the rest, are authentically Songs. I would say, in strictness, that all right Poems are ; that whatsoever is not *sung* is properly no Poem, but a piece of Prose cramped into jingling lines,—to the great injury of the grammar, to the great grief of the reader, for most part ! What we want to get at is the *thought* the man had, if he had any : why should he twist it into jingle, if he *could* speak it out plainly ? It is only when the heart of him is rapt into true passion of melody, and the very tones of him, according to Coleridge's remark, become musical by the greatness, depth, and music of his thoughts, that we can give him right to rhyme and sing ; that we call him a Poet, and listen to him as the Heroic of Speakers,—whose speech *is* Song. Pretenders to this are many ; and to an earnest reader, I doubt, it is for most part a very melancholy, not to say an insupportable business, that of reading rhyme ! Rhyme that had no inward necessity to be rhymed :—it ought to have told us plainly, without any jingle, what it was aiming at. I would advise all men who *can* speak their thought, not to sing it ; to understand that, in a serious time, among serious men, there is no vocation in them for singing it. Precisely as we love the true song, and are charmed by it as by something divine, so shall we hate the false song, and account it a mere wooden noise, a thing hollow, superfluous, altogether an insincere and offensive thing.

I give Dante my highest praise when I say of his *Divine Comedy* that it is, in all senses, genuinely a Song. In the very sound of it there is a *canto fermo* ; it proceeds as by a chant. The language, his simple *terza rima*, doubtless helped him in this. One reads along naturally with a sort of *lilt*. But I add, that it could not be otherwise ; for the essence and material of the work are themselves rhythmic. Its depth, and rapt passion and sincerity, makes it musical ; —go *deep* enough, there is music everywhere. A true inward symmetry, what one calls an architectural harmony, reigns in it, proportionates it all : architectural ; which also partakes of the character of music. The three kingdoms, *Inferno*, *Purgatorio*, *Paradiso*, look-out on one another like compartments of a great edifice ; a great supernatural world-cathedral, piled-up there, stern, solemn, awful ; Dante's World of Souls ! It is, at bottom, the *sincerest* of all Poems ; sincerity, here too, we find to be the measure of worth. It came deep out of the author's heart of hearts ;

and it goes deep, and through long generations, into ours. The people of Verona, when they saw him on the streets, used to say, "*Eccovi l' uom ch' è stato all' Inferno*, See, there is the man that was in Hell!" Ah yes, he had been in Hell;—in Hell enough, in long severe sorrow and struggle; as the like of him is pretty sure to have been. Commedias that come-out *divine* are not accomplished otherwise. Thought, true labour of any kind, highest virtue itself, is it not the daughter of Pain? Born as out of the black whirlwind;—true *effort*, in fact, as of a captive struggling to free himself: that is Thought. In all ways we are "to become perfect through *suffering*."—But, as I say, no work known to me is so elaborated as this of Dante's. It has all been as if molten, in the hottest furnace of his soul. It had made him "lean" for many years. Not the general whole only; every compartment of it is worked-out, with intense earnestness, into truth, into clear visuality. Each answers to the other; each fits in its place, like a marble stone accurately hewn and polished. It is the soul of Dante, and in this the soul of the middle ages, rendered forever rhythmically visible there. No light task; a right intense one: but a task which is *done*.

Perhaps one would say, *intensity*, with the much that depends on it, is the prevailing character of Dante's genius. Dante does not come before us as a large catholic mind; rather as a narrow, and even sectarian mind: it is partly the fruit of his age and position, but partly too of his own nature. His greatness has, in all senses, concentered itself into fiery emphasis and depth. He is world-great not because he is world-wide, but because he is world-deep. Through all objects he pierces as it were down into the heart of Being. I know nothing so intense as Dante. Consider, for example, to begin with the outermost development of his intensity, consider how he paints. He has a great power of vision; seizes the very type of a thing; presents that and nothing more. You remember that first view he gets of the Hall of Dite: *red* pinnacle, redhot cone of iron glowing through the dim immensity of gloom;—so vivid, so distinct, visible at once and forever! It is as an emblem of the whole genius of Dante. There is a brevity, an abrupt precision in him: Tacitus is not briefer, more condensed; and then in Dante it seems a natural condensation, spontaneous to the man. One smiting word; and then there is silence, nothing more said. His silence is more

eloquent than words. It is strange with what a sharp decisive grace he snatches the true likeness of a matter : cuts into the matter as with a pen of fire. Plutus, the blustering giant, collapses at Virgil's rebuke ; it is " as the sails sink, the mast being suddenly broken." Or that poor Brunetto Latini, with the *cotto aspetto*, " face *baked*," parched brown and lean ; and the " fiery snow " that falls on them there, a " fiery snow without wind," slow, deliberate, never-ending ! Or the lids of those Tombs ; square sarcophaguses, in that silent dim-burning Hall, each with its Soul in torment ; the lids laid open there ; they are to be shut at the Day of Judgment, through Eternity. And how Farinata rises ; and how Cavalcante falls—at hearing of his Son, and the past tense " *fue* " ! The very movements in Dante have something brief ; swift, decisive, almost military. It is of the inmost essence of his genius this sort of painting. The fiery, swift Italian nature of the man, so silent, passionate, with its quick abrupt movements, its silent " pale rages," speaks itself in these things.

For though this of painting is one of the outermost developments of a man, it comes like all else from the essential faculty of him ; it is physiognomical of the whole man. Find a man whose words paint you a likeness, you have found a man worth something ; mark his manner of doing it, as very characteristic of him. In the first place, he could not have discerned the object at all, or seen the vital type of it, unless he had, what we may call, *sympathised* with it,—had sympathy in him to bestow on objects. He must have been *sincere* about it too ; sincere and sympathetic : a man without worth cannot give you the likeness of any object ; he dwells in vague outwardness, fallacy, and trivial hearsay, about all objects. And indeed may we not say that intellect altogether expresses itself in this power of discerning what an object is ? Whatsoever of faculty a man's mind may have will come out here. Is it even of business, a matter to be done ? The gifted man is he who *sees* the essential point, and leaves all the rest aside in surplusage : It is his faculty too, the man of business's faculty, that he discern the true *likeness*, not the false superficial one, of the thing he has got to work in. And how much of *morality* is in the kind of insight we get of anything ; " the eye seeing in all things what it brought with it the faculty of seeing " ! To the mean eye all things are trivial, as certainly as to the jaundiced they are yellow. Raphael,

the Painters tell us, is the best of all Portrait-painters withal. No most gifted eye can exhaust the significance of any object. In the commonest human face there lies more than Raphael will take-away with him.

Dante's painting is not graphic only, brief, true, and of a vividness as of fire in dark night; taken on the wider scale, it is everyway noble, and the outcome of a great soul. Francesca and her Lover, what qualities in that! A thing woven as out of rainbows, on a ground of eternal black. A small flute-voice of infinite wail speaks there, into our very heart of hearts. A touch of womanhood in it too: *della bella persona, che mi fu tolta;* and how, even in the Pit of woe, it is a solace that *he* will never part from her! Saddest tragedy in these *alti guai*. And the racking winds, in that *aer bruno*, whirl them away again, to wail forever!—Strange to think: Dante was the friend of this poor Francesca's father; Francesca herself may have sat upon the Poet's knee, as a bright innocent little child. Infinite pity, yet also infinite rigour of law: it is so Nature is made; it is so Dante discerned that she was made. What a paltry notion is that of his *Divine Comedy's* being a poor splenetic impotent terrestrial libel; putting those into Hell whom he could not be avenged-upon on earth! I suppose if ever pity, tender as a mother's, was in the heart of any man, it was in Dante's. But a man who does not know rigour cannot pity either. His very pity will be cowardly, egoistic, —sentimentality, or little better. I know not in the world an affection equal to that of Dante. It is a tenderness, a trembling, longing, pitying love: like the wail of Æolean harps, soft, soft; like a child's young heart;—and then that stern, sore-saddened heart! These longings of his towards his Beatrice; their meeting together in the *Paradiso*; his gazing in her pure transfigured eyes, her that had been purified by death so long, separated from him so far:—one likens it to the song of angels; it is among the purest utterances of affection, perhaps the very purest, that ever came out of a human soul.

For the *intense* Dante is intense in all things; he has got into the essence of all. His intellectual insight as painter, on occasion too as reasoner, is but the result of all other sorts of intensity. Morally great, above all, we must call him; it is the beginning of all. His scorn, his grief are as transcendent as his love;—as indeed, what are they but the *inverse* or *converse* of his love? "*A Dio spiacenti ed a'*

nemici sui, Hateful to God and to the enemies of God : " lofty scorn, unappeasable silent reprobation and aversion ; " *Non ragionam di lor*, We will not speak of *them*, look only and pass." Or think of this ; " They have not the *hope* to die, *Non han speranza di morte*." One day, it had risen sternly benign on the scathed heart of Dante, that he, wretched, never-resting, worn as he was, would full surely *die* ; " that Destiny itself could not doom him not to die." Such words are in this man. For rigour, earnestness and depth, he is not to be paralleled in the modern world ; to seek his parallel we must go into the Hebrew Bible, and live with the antique Prophets there.

I do not agree with much modern criticism, in greatly preferring the *Inferno* to the two other parts of the Divine *Commedia*. Such preference belongs, I imagine, to our general Byronism of taste, and is like to be a transient feeling. The *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*, especially the former, one would almost say, is even more excellent than it. It is a noble thing that *Purgatorio*, " Mountain of Purification " ; an emblem of the noblest conception of that age. If Sin is so fatal, and Hell is and must be so rigorous, awful, yet in Repentance too is man purified ; Repentance is the grand Christian act. It is beautiful how Dante works it out. The *tremolar dell' onde*, that " trembling " of the ocean-waves, under the first pure gleam of morning, dawning afar on the wandering Two, is as the type of an altered mood. Hope has now dawned ; never-dying Hope, if in company still with heavy sorrow. The obscure sojourn of dæmons and reprobate is underfoot ; a soft breathing of penitence mounts higher and higher, to the Throne of Mercy itself. " Pray for me," the denizens of that Mount of Pain all say to him. " Tell my Giovanna to pray for me," my daughter Giovanna ; " I think her mother loves me no more ! " They toil painfully up by that winding steep, " bent-down like corbels of a building," some of them,—crushed-together so " for the sin of pride " ; yet nevertheless in years, in ages and æons, they shall have reached the top, which is Heaven's gate, and by Mercy shall have been admitted in. The joy too of all, when one has prevailed ; the whole Mountain shakes with joy, and a psalm of praise rises, when one soul has perfected repentance and got its sin and misery left behind ! I call all this a noble embodiment of a true noble thought.

But indeed the Three compartments mutually support

one another, are indispensable to one another. The *Paradiso*, a kind of inarticulate music to me, is the redeeming side of the *Inferno*; the *Inferno* without it were untrue. All three make-up the true Unseen World, as figured in the Christianity of the Middle Ages; a thing forever memorable, forever true in the essence of it, to all men. It was perhaps delineated in no human soul with such depth of veracity as in this of Dante's; a man *sent* to sing it, to keep it long memorable. Very notable with what brief simplicity he passes out of the every-day reality, into the Invisible one; and in the second or third stanza, we find ourselves in the World of Spirits; and dwell there, as among things palpable, indubitable! To Dante they *were* so; the real world, as it is called, and its facts, was but the threshold to an infinitely higher Fact of a World. At bottom, the one was as *preter*natural as the other. Has not each man a soul? He will not only be a spirit, but is one. To the earnest Dante it is all one visible Fact; he believes it, sees it; is the Poet of it in virtue of that. Sincerity, I say again, is the saving merit, now as always.

Dante's Hell, Purgatory, Paradise, are a symbol withal, an emblematic representation of his Belief about this Universe:—some Critic in a future age, like those Scandinavian ones the other day, who has ceased altogether to think as Dante did, may find this too all an "Allegory," perhaps an idle Allegory! It is a sublime embodiment, or sublimest, of the soul of Christianity. It expresses, as in huge worldwide architectural emblems, how the Christian Dante felt Good and Evil to be the two polar elements of this Creation, on which it all turns; that these two differ not by *preferability* of one to the other, but by incompatibility absolute and infinite; that the one is excellent and high as light and Heaven, the other hideous, black as Gehenna and the Pit of Hell! Everlasting Justice, yet with Penitence, with everlasting Pity,—all Christianism, as Dante and the Middle Ages had it, is emblemed here. Emblemed: and yet, as I urged the other day, with what entire truth of purpose; how unconscious of any embleming! Hell, Purgatory, Paradise: these things were not fashioned as emblems; was there, in our Modern European Mind, any thought at all of their being emblems! Were they not indubitable awful facts; the whole heart of man taking them for practically true, all Nature everywhere confirming them? So is it always in these things. Men

do not believe an Allegory. The future Critic, whatever his new thought may be, who considers this of Dante to have been all got-up as an Allegory, will commit one sore mistake !—Paganism we recognised as a veracious expression of the earnest awe-struck feeling of man towards the Universe ; veracious, true once, and still not without worth for us. But mark here the difference of Paganism and Christianism ; one great difference. Paganism emblemed chiefly the Operations of Nature ; the destinies, efforts, combinations, vicissitudes of things and men in this world ; Christianism emblemed the Law of Human Duty, the Moral Law of Man. One was for the sensuous nature : a rude helpless utterance of the *first* Thought of men,—the chief recognised virtue, Courage, Superiority to Fear. The other was not for the sensuous nature, but for the moral. What a progress is here, if in that one respect only !—

And so in this Dante, as we said, had ten silent centuries, in a very strange way, found a voice. The *Divina Commedia* is of Dante's writing ; yet in truth *it* belongs to ten Christian centuries, only the finishing of it is Dante's. So always. The craftsman there, the smith with that metal of his, with these tools, with these cunning methods,—how little of all he does is properly *his* work ! All past inventive men work there with him ;—as indeed with all of us, in all things. Dante is the spokesman of the Middle Ages ; the Thought they lived by stands here, in everlasting music. These sublime ideas of his, terrible and beautiful, are the fruit of the Christian Meditation of all the good men who had gone before him. Precious they ; but also is not he precious ? Much, had not he spoken, would have been dumb ; not dead, yet living voiceless.

On the whole, is it not an utterance, this mystic Song, at once of one of the greatest human souls, and of the highest thing that Europe had hitherto realised for itself ? Christianism, as Dante sings it, is another than Paganism in the rude Norse mind ; another than " Bastard Christianism " half-articulately spoken in the Arab Desert seven-hundred years before !—The noblest *idea* made *real* hitherto among men, is sung, and emblemed-forth abidingly, by one of the noblest men. In the one sense and in the other, are we not right glad to possess it ? As I calculate, it may last yet for long thousands of years. For the thing that is uttered from the inmost parts of a man's soul, differs alto-

gether from what is uttered by the outer part. The outer is of the day, under the empire of mode; the outer passes away, in swift endless changes; the inmost is the same yesterday, today and for ever. True souls, in all generations of the world, who look on this Dante, will find a brotherhood in him; the deep sincerity of his thoughts, his woes and hopes, will speak likewise to their sincerity; they will feel that this Dante too was a brother. Napoleon in Saint-Helena is charmed with the genial veracity of old Homer. The oldest Hebrew Prophet, under a vesture the most diverse from ours, does yet, because he speaks from the heart of man, speak to all men's hearts. It is the one sole secret of continuing long memorable. Dante, for depth of sincerity, is like an antique Prophet too; his words, like theirs, come from his very heart. One need not wonder if it were predicted that his Poem might be the most enduring thing our Europe has yet made; for nothing so endures as a truly spoken word. All cathedrals, pontificalities, brass and stone, and outer arrangement never so lasting, are brief in comparison to an unfathomable heart-song like this: one feels as if it might survive, still of importance to men, when these had all sunk into new irrecognisable combinations, and had ceased individually to be. Europe has made much; great cities, great empires, encyclopædias, creeds, bodies of opinion and practice: but it has made little of the class of Dante's Thought. Homer yet *is*, veritably present face to face with every open soul of us; and Greece, where is *it*? Desolate for thousands of years; away, vanished; a bewildered heap of stones and rubbish, the life and existence of it all gone. Like a dream; like the dust of King Agamemnon! Greece was; Greece, except in the *words* it spoke, is not.

The uses of this Dante? We will not say much about his "uses." A human soul who has once got into that primal element of *Song*, and sung-forth fitly somewhat therefrom, has worked in the *depths* of our existence; feeding through long times the life-*roots* of all excellent human things whatsoever,—in a way that "utilities" will not succeed well in calculating! We will not estimate the Sun by the quantity of gas-light it saves us; Dante shall be invaluable, or of no value. One remark I may make: the contrast in this respect between the Hero-Poet and the Hero-Prophet. In a hundred years, Mahomet, as we saw, had his Arabians at Grenada and at Delhi; Dante's

Italians seem to be yet very much where they were. Shall we say, then, Dante's effect on the world was small in comparison? Not so: his arena is far more restricted; but also it is far nobler, clearer;—perhaps not less but more important. Mahomet speaks to great masses of men, in the coarse dialect adapted to such; a dialect filled with inconsistencies, crudities, follies: on the great masses alone can he act, and there with good and with evil strangely blended. Dante speaks to the noble, the pure and great, in all times and places. Neither does he grow obsolete, as the other does. Dante burns as a pure star, fixed there in the firmament, at which the great and the high of all ages kindle themselves: he is the possession of all the chosen of the world for uncounted time. Dante, one calculates, may long survive Mahomet. In this way the balance may be made straight again.

But, at any rate, it is not by what is called their effect on the world by what *we* can judge of their effect there, that a man and his work are measured. Effect? Influence? Utility? Let a man *do* his work; the fruit of it is the care of Another than he. It will grow its own fruit; and whether embodied in Caliph Thrones and Arabian Conquests, so that it "fills all Morning and Evening Newspapers," and all Histories, which are a kind of distilled Newspapers; or not embodied so at all;—what matters that? That is not the real fruit of it! The Arabian Caliph, in so far only as he did something, was something. If the great Cause of Man and Man's work in God's Earth, got no furtherance from the Arabian Caliph, then no matter how many scimetars he drew, how many gold piasters pocketed, and what uproar and blaring he made in this world,—*he* was but a loud-sounding inanity and futility; at bottom, he *was* not at all. Let us honour the great empire of *Silence*, once more! The boundless treasury which we do *not* jingle in our pockets, or count up and present before men! It is perhaps, of all things, the usefulest for each of us to do, in these loud times.——

As Dante, the Italian man, was sent into our world to embody musically the Religion of the Middle Ages, the Religion of our Modern Europe, its Inner Life; so Shakspeare, we may say, embodies for us the Outer Life of our Europe as developed then, its chivalries, courtesies, humours, ambitions, what practical way of thinking, acting, looking

at the world, men then had. As in Homer, we may still construe Old Greece; so in Shakspeare and Dante, after thousands of years, what our modern Europe was, in Faith and in Practice, will still be legible. Dante has given us the Faith or soul; Shakspeare, in a not less noble way, has given us the Practice or body. This latter also we were to have; a man was sent for it, the man Shakspeare. Just when that chivalry way of life had reached its last finish, and was on the point of breaking down into slow or swift dissolution, as we now see it everywhere, this other sovereign Poet, with his seeing eye, with his perennial singing voice, was sent to take note of it, to give long-enduring record of it. Two fit men: Dante, deep, fierce as the central fire of the world; Shakspeare, wide, placid, far-seeing, as the Sun, the upper light of the world. Italy produced the one world-voice; we English had the honour of producing the other.

Curious enough how, as it were by mere accident, this man came to us. I think always, so great, quiet, complete and self-sufficing is this Shakspeare, had the Warwickshire Squire not prosecuted him for deer-stealing, we had perhaps never heard of him as a Poet! The woods and skies, the rustic Life of Man in Stratford there, had been enough for this man! But indeed that strange outbudding of our whole English Existence, which we call the Elizabethan Era, did not it too come as of its own accord? The "Tree Igdrasil" buds and withers by its own laws,—too deep for our scanning. Yet it does bud and wither, and every bough and leaf of it is there, by fixed eternal laws; not a Sir Thomas Lucy but comes at the hour fit for him. Curious, I say, and not sufficiently considered: how everything does coöperate with all; not a leaf rotting on the highway but is indissoluble portion of solar and stellar systems; no thought, word or act of man but has sprung withal out of all men, and works sooner or later, recognisably or irrecognisably, on all men! It is all a Tree: circulation of sap and influences, mutual communication of every minutest leaf with the lowest talon of a root, with every other greatest and minutest portion of the whole. The Tree Igdrasil, that has its roots down in the Kingdoms of Hela and Death, and whose boughs overspread the highest Heaven!—

In some sense it may be said that this glorious Elizabethan Era with its Shakspeare, as the outcome and flowerage of all which had preceded it, is itself attributable to the Catholicism of the Middle Ages. The Christian Faith, which was

the theme of Dante's Song, had produced this Practical Life which Shakspeare was to sing. For Religion then, as it now and always is, was the soul of Practice; the primary vital fact in men's life. And remark here, as rather curious, that Middle-Age Catholicism was abolished, so far as Acts of Parliament could abolish it, before Shakspeare, the noblest product of it, made his appearance. He did make his appearance nevertheless. Nature at her own time, with Catholicism or what else might be necessary, sent him forth: taking small thought of Acts of Parliament. King-Henrys, Queen-Elizabeths go their way; and Nature too goes hers. Acts of Parliament, on the whole, are small, notwithstanding the noise they make. What Act of Parliament, debate at St. Stephen's, on the hustings or elsewhere, was it that brought this Shakspeare into being? No dining at Freemasons' Tavern, opening subscription-lists, selling of shares, and infinite other jangling and true or false endeavouring! This Elizabethan Era, and all its nobleness and blessedness, came without proclamation, preparation of ours. Priceless Shakspeare was the free gift of Nature; given altogether silently;—received altogether silently, as if it had been a thing of little account. And yet, very literally, it is a priceless thing. One should look at that side of matters too.

Of this Shakspeare of ours, perhaps the opinion one sometimes hears a little idolatrously expressed is, in fact, the right one; I think the best judgment not of this country only, but of Europe at large, is slowly pointing to the conclusion, That Shakspeare is the chief of all Poets hitherto; the greatest intellect who, in our recorded world, has left record of himself in the way of Literature. On the whole, I know not such a power of vision, such a faculty of thought, if we take all the characters of it, in any other man. Such a calmness of depth; placid joyous strength; all things imaged in that great soul of his so true and clear, as in a tranquil unfathomable sea! It has been said, that in the constructing of Shakspeare's Dramas there is, apart from all other "faculties" as they are called, an understanding manifested, equal to that in Bacon's *Novum Organum*. That is true; and it is not a truth that strikes every one. It would become more apparent if we tried, any of us for himself, how, out of Shakspeare's dramatic materials, *we* could fashion such a result! The built house seems all so fit,—everyway as it should be, as if it came there by its own law and the nature of things,—we forget the rude disorderly

quarry it was shaped from. The very perfection of the house, as if Nature herself had made it, hides the builder's merit. Perfect, more perfect than any other man, we may call Shakspeare in this : he discerns, knows as by instinct, what condition he works under, what his materials are, what his own force and its relation to them is. It is not a transitory glance of insight that will suffice ; it is deliberate illumination of the whole matter ; it is a calmly *seeing* eye ; a great intellect, in short. How a man, of some wide thing that he has witnessed, will construct a narrative, what kind of picture and delineation he will give of it,—is the best measure you could get of what intellect is in the man. Which circumstance is vital and shall stand prominent ; which unessential, fit to be suppressed ; where is the true *beginning*, the true sequence and ending ? To find out this, you task the whole force of insight that is in the man. He must *understand* the thing ; according to the depth of his understanding, will the fitness of his answer be. You will try him so. Does like join itself to like ; does the spirit of method stir in that confusion, so that its embroilment becomes order ? Can the man say, *Fiat lux*, Let there be light ; and out of chaos make a world ? Precisely as there is *light* in himself, will he accomplish this.

Or indeed we may say again, it is in what I called Portrait-painting, delineating of men and things, especially of men, that Shakspeare is great. All the greatness of the man comes out decisively here. It is unexampled, I think, that calm creative perspicacity of Shakspeare. The thing he looks at reveals not this or that face of it, but its inmost heart, and generic secret : it dissolves itself as in light before him, so that he discerns the perfect structure of it. Creative, we said : poetic creation, what is this too but *seeing* the thing sufficiently ? The *word* that will describe the thing, follows of itself from such clear intense sight of the thing. And is not Shakspeare's *morality*, his valour, candour, tolerance, truthfulness ; his whole victorious strength and greatness, which can triumph over such obstructions, visible there too ? Great as the world ! No *twisted*, poor convex-concave mirror, reflecting all objects with its own convexities and concavities ; a perfectly *level* mirror ;—that is to say withal, if we will understand it, a man justly related to all things and men, a good man. It is truly a lordly spectacle how this great soul takes-in all kinds of men and objects, a Falstaff, an Othello, a Juliet, a Corio-

Ianus ; sets them all forth to us in their round completeness ; loving, just, the equal brother of all. *Novum Organum*, and all the intellect you will find in Bacon, is of a quite secondary order ; earthly, material, poor in comparison with this. Among modern men, one finds, in strictness, almost nothing of the same rank. Goethe alone, since the days of Shakspeare, reminds me of it. Of him too you say that he *saw* the object ; you may say what he himself says of Shakspeare : " His characters are like watches with dial-plates of transparent crystal ; they show you the hour like others, and the inward mechanism also is all visible."

The seeing eye ! It is this that discloses the inner harmony of things ; what Nature meant, what musical idea Nature has wrapped-up in these often rough embodiments. Something she did mean. To the seeing eye that something were discernible. Are they base, miserable things ? You can laugh over them, you can weep over them ; you can in some way or other genially relate yourself to them ;— you can, at lowest, hold your peace about them, turn away your own and others' face from them, till the hour come for practically exterminating and extinguishing them ! At bottom, it is the Poet's first gift, as it is all men's, that he have intellect enough. He will be a Poet if he have : a Poet in word ; or failing that, perhaps still better, a Poet in act. Whether he write at all ; and if so, whether in prose or in verse, will depend on accidents : who knows on what extremely trivial accidents,—perhaps on his having had a singing-master, on his being taught to sing in his boyhood ! But the faculty which enables him to discern the inner heart of things, and the harmony that dwells there (for whatsoever exists has a harmony in the heart of it, or it would not hold together and exist), is not the result of habits or accidents, but the gift of Nature herself ; the primary outfit for a Heroic Man in what sort soever. To the Poet, as to every other, we say first of all, *See*. If you cannot do that, it is of no use to keep stringing rhymes together, jingling sensibilities against each other, and *name* yourself a Poet ; there is no hope for you. If you can, there is, in prose or verse, in action or speculation, all manner of hope. The crabbed old Schoolmaster used to ask, when they brought him a new pupil, " But are ye sure he's *not a dunce* ? " Why, really one might ask the same thing, in regard to every man proposed for whatsoever function ; and consider it as the one inquiry needful : Are ye sure he's

not a dunce ? There is, in this world, no other entirely fatal person.

For, in fact, I say the degree of vision that dwells in a man is a correct measure of the man. If called to define Shakspeare's faculty, I should say superiority of Intellect, and think I had included all under that. What indeed are faculties ? We talk of faculties as if they were distinct, things separable ; as if a man had intellect, imagination, fancy, etc., as he has hands, feet, and arms. That is a capital error. Then again, we hear of a man's " intellectual nature," and of his " moral nature," as if these again were divisible, and existed apart. Necessities of language do perhaps prescribe such forms of utterance ; we must speak, I am aware, in that way, if we are to speak at all. But words ought not to harden into things for us. It seems to me, our apprehension of this matter is, for most part, radically falsified thereby. We ought to know withal, and to keep forever in mind, that these divisions are at bottom but *names* ; that man's spiritual nature, the vital Force which dwells in him, is essentially one and indivisible ; that what we call imagination, fancy, understanding, and so forth, are but different figures of the same Power of Insight, all indissolubly connected with each other, physiognomically related ; that if we knew one of them, we might know all of them. Morality itself, what we call the moral quality of a man, what is this but another *side* of the one vital Force whereby he is and works ? All that a man does is physiognomical of him. You may see how a man would fight, by the way in which he sings ; his courage, or want of courage, is visible in the word he utters, in the opinion he has formed, no less than in the stroke he strikes. He is *one* ; and preaches the same Self abroad in all these ways.

Without hands a man might have feet, and could still walk : but, consider it,—without morality, intellect were impossible for him ; a thoroughly immoral *man* could not know anything at all ! To know a thing, what we can call knowing, a man must first *love* the thing, sympathise with it : that is, be *virtuously* related to it. If he have not the justice to put down his own selfishness at every turn, the courage to stand by the dangerous-true at every turn, how shall he know ? His virtues, all of them, will lie recorded in his knowledge. Nature, with her truth, remains to the bad, to the selfish and the pusillanimous forever a sealed

book : what such can know of Nature is mean, superficial, small ; for the uses of the day merely.—But does not the very Fox know something of Nature ? Exactly so : it knows where the geese lodge ! The human Reynard, very frequent everywhere in the world, what more does he know but this and the like of this ? Nay, it should be considered too, that if the Fox had not a certain vulpine *morality*, he could not even know where the geese were, or get at the geese ! If he spent his time in splenetic atrabiliar reflections on his own misery, his ill usage by Nature, Fortune and other Foxes, and so forth ; and had not courage, promptitude, practicality, and other suitable vulpine gifts and graces, he would catch no geese. We may say of the Fox too, that his morality and insight are of the same dimensions ; different faces of the same internal unity of vulpine life !—These things are worth stating ; for the contrary of them acts with manifold very baleful perversion, in this time : what limitations, modifications they require, your own candour will supply.

If I say therefore, that Shakspeare is the greatest of Intellects, I have said all concerning him. But there is more in Shakspeare's intellect than we have yet seen. It is what I call an unconscious intellect ; there is more virtue in it than he himself is aware of. Novalis beautifully remarks of him, that those Dramas of his are Products of Nature too, deep as Nature herself. I find a great truth in this saying. Shakspeare's Art is not Artifice ; the noblest worth of it is not there by plan or precontrivance. It grows-up from the deeps of Nature, through this noble sincere soul, who is a voice of Nature. The latest generations of men will find new meanings in Shakspeare, new elucidations of their own human being ; " new harmonies with the infinite structure of the Universe ; concurrences with later ideas, affinities with the higher powers and senses of man." This well deserves meditating. It is Nature's highest reward to a true simple great soul, that he get thus to be *a part of herself*. Such a man's works, whatsoever he with utmost conscious exertion and forethought shall accomplish, grow up withal *un*consciously, from the unknown deeps in him ;—as the oak-tree grows from the Earth's bosom, as the mountains and waters shape themselves ; with a symmetry grounded on Nature's own laws, conformable to all Truth whatsoever. How much in Shakspeare lies hid ; his sorrows, his silent struggles

known to himself; much that was not known at all, not speakable at all: like *roots*, like sap and forces working underground! Speech is great; but Silence is greater.

Withal the joyful tranquillity of this man is notable. I will not blame Dante for his misery: it is as battle without victory; but true battle,—the first, indispensable thing. Yet I call Shakspeare greater than Dante, in that he fought truly, and did conquer. Doubt it not, he had his own sorrows: those *Sonnets* of his will even testify expressly in what deep waters he had waded, and swum struggling for his life;—as what man like him ever failed to have to do? It seems to me a heedless notion, our common one, that he sat like a bird on the bough; and sang forth, free and offhand, never knowing the troubles of other men. Not so; with no man is it so. How could a man travel forward from rustic deer-poaching to such tragedy-writing, and not fall-in with sorrows by the way? Or, still better, how could a man delineate a Hamlet, a Coriolanus, a Macbeth, so many suffering heroic hearts, if his own heroic heart had never suffered?—And now, in contrast with all this, observe his mirthfulness, his genuine overflowing love of laughter! You would say, in no point does he *exaggerate* but only in laughter. Fiery objurgations, words that pierce and burn, are to be found in Shakspeare; yet he is always in measure here; never what Johnson would remark as a specially "good hater." But his laughter seems to pour from him in floods; he heaps all manner of ridiculous nicknames on the butt he is bantering, tumbles and tosses him in all sorts of horse-play; you would say, with his whole heart laughs. And then, if not always the finest, it is always a genial laughter. Not at mere weakness, at misery or poverty; never. No man who *can* laugh, what we call laughing, will laugh at these things. It is some poor character only *desiring* to laugh, and have the credit of wit, that does so. Laughter means sympathy; good laughter is not "the crackling of thorns under the pot." Even at stupidity and pretension this Shakspeare does not laugh otherwise than genially. Dogberry and Verges tickle our very hearts; and we dismiss them covered with explosions of laughter: but we like the poor fellows only the better for our laughing; and hope they will get on well there, and continue Presidents of the City-watch. Such laughter, like sunshine on the deep sea, is very beautiful to me.

We have no room to speak of Shakspeare's individual works; though perhaps there is much still waiting to be said on that head. Had we, for instance, all his plays reviewed as *Hamlet*, in *Wilhelm Meister*, is! A thing which might, one day, be done. August Wilhelm Schlegel has a remark on his Historical Plays, *Henry Fifth* and the others, which is worth remembering. He calls them a kind of National Epic. Marlborough, you recollect, said, he knew no English History but what he had learned from Shakspeare. There are really, if we look to it, few as memorable Histories. The great salient points are admirably seized; all rounds itself off, into a kind of rhythmic coherence; it is, as Schlegel says, *epic*;—as indeed all delineation by a great thinker will be. There are right beautiful things in those Pieces, which indeed together form one beautiful thing. That battle of Agincourt strikes me as one of the most perfect things, in its sort, we anywhere have of Shakspeare's. The description of the two hosts: the worn-out, jaded English; the dread hour, big with destiny, when the battle shall begin; and then that deathless valour: "Ye good yeoman, whose limbs were made in England!" There is a noble Patriotism in it,—far other than the "indifference" you sometimes hear ascribed to Shakspeare. A true English heart breathes, calm and strong, through the whole business; not boisterous, protrusive; all the better for that. There is a sound in it like the ring of steel. This man too had a right stroke in him, had it come to that!

But I will say, of Shakspeare's works generally, that we have no full impress of him there; even as full as we have of many men. His works are so many windows, through which we see a glimpse of the world that was in him. All his works seem, comparatively speaking, cursory, imperfect, written under cramping circumstances; giving only here and there a note of the full utterance of the man. Passages there are that come upon you like splendour out of Heaven; bursts of radiance, illuminating the very heart of the thing: you say, "That is *true*, spoken once and forever; wheresoever and whensoever there is an open human soul, that will be recognised as true!" Such bursts, however, make us feel that the surrounding matter is not radiant; that it is, in part, temporary, conventional. Alas, Shakspeare had to write for the Globe Playhouse: his great soul had to crush itself, as it could, into that and no other mould. It was with him, then, as it is with us all. No man works save

under conditions. The sculptor cannot set his own free Thought before us ; but his Thought as he could translate it into the stone that was given, with the tools that were given. *Disjecta membra* are all that we find of any Poet, or of any man.

Whoever looks intelligently at this Shakspeare may recognise that he too was a *Prophet*, in his way ; of an insight analogous to the Prophetic, though he took it up in another strain. Nature seemed to this man also divine ; *un*speakable, deep as Tophet, high as Heaven : " We are such stuff as Dreams are made of ! " That scroll in Westminster Abbey, which few read with understanding, is of the depth of any seer. But the man sang ; did not preach, except musically. We called Dante the melodious Priest of Middle-Age Catholicism. May we not call Shakspeare the still more melodious Priest of a *true* Catholicism, the " Universal Church " of the Future and of all times ? No narrow superstition, harsh asceticism, intolerance, fanatical fierceness or perversion : a Revelation, so far as it goes, that such a thousandfold hidden beauty and divineness dwells in all Nature ; which let all men worship as they can ! We may say without offence, that there rises a kind of universal Psalm out of this Shakspeare too ; not unfit to make itself heard among the still more sacred Psalms. Not in disharmony with these, if we understood them, but in harmony! —I cannot call this Shakspeare a " Sceptic," as some do ; his indifference to the creeds and theological quarrels of his time misleading them. No : neither unpatriotic, though he says little about his Patriotism ; nor sceptic, though he says little about his Faith. Such " indifference " was the fruit of his greatness withal : his whole heart was in his own grand sphere of worship (we may call it such) ; these other controversies, vitally important to other men, were not vital to him.

But call it worship, call it what you will, is it not a right glorious thing, and set of things, this that Shakspeare has brought us ? For myself, I feel that there is actually a kind of sacredness in the fact of such a man being sent into this Earth. Is he not an eye to us all ; a blessed heaven-sent Bringer of Light ?—And, at bottom, was it not perhaps far better that this Shakspeare, everyway an unconscious man, was *conscious* of no Heavenly message ? He did not feel, like Mahomet, because he saw into those internal

Splendours, that he specially was the " Prophet of God " : and was he not greater than Mahomet in that ? Greater ; and also, if we compute strictly, as we did in Dante's case, more successful. It was intrinsically an error that notion of Mahomet's, of his supreme Prophethood ; and has come down to us inextricably involved in error to this day ; dragging along with it such a coil of fables, impurities, intolerances, as makes it a questionable step for me here and now to say, as I have done, that Mahomet was a true Speaker at all, and not rather an ambitious charlatan, perversity and simulacrum ; no Speaker, but a Babbler ! Even in Arabia, as I compute, Mahomet will have exhausted himself and become obsolete, while this Shakspeare, this Dante may still be young ;—while this Shakspeare may still pretend to be a Priest of Mankind, of Arabia as of other places, for unlimited periods to come !

Compared with any speaker or singer one knows, even with Æschylus or Homer, why should he not, for veracity and universality, last like them ? He is *sincere* as they ; reaches deep down like them, to the universal and perennial. But as for Mahomet, I think it had been better for him *not* to be so conscious ! Alas, poor Mahomet ; all that he was *conscious* of was a mere error ; a futility and triviality,—as indeed such ever is. The truly great in him too was the unconscious : that he was a wild Arab lion of the desert, and did speak-out with that great thunder-voice of his, not by words which he *thought* to be great, but by actions, by feelings, by a history which *were* great ! His Koran has become a stupid piece of prolix absurdity ; we do not believe, like him, that God wrote that ! The Great Man here too, as always, is a Force of Nature : whatsoever is truly great in him springs-up from the *in*articulate deeps.

Well : this is our poor Warwickshire Peasant, who rose to be Manager of a Playhouse, so that he could live without begging ; whom the Earl of Southampton cast some kind glances on ; whom Sir Thomas Lucy, many thanks to him, was for sending to the Treadmill ! We did not account him a god, like Odin, while he dwelt with us ;—on which point there were much to be said. But I will say rather, or repeat : In spite of the sad state Hero-worship now lies in, consider what this Shakspeare has actually become among us. Which Englishman we ever made, in this land of ours, which million of Englishmen, would we not give-up rather

than the Stratford Peasant? There is no regiment of highest Dignitaries that we would sell him for. He is the grandest thing we have yet done. For our honour among foreign nations, as an ornament to our English Household, what item is there that we would not surrender rather than him? Consider now, if they asked us, Will you give-up your Indian Empire or your Shakspeare, you English; never have had any Indian Empire, or never have had any Shakspeare? Really it were a grave question. Official persons would answer doubtless in official language; but we, for our part too, should not we be forced to answer: Indian Empire, or no Indian Empire; we cannot do without Shakspeare! Indian Empire will go, at any rate, some day; but this Shakspeare does not go, he lasts for ever with us; we cannot give-up our Shakspeare!

Nay, apart from spiritualities; and considering him merely as a real, marketable, tangibly-useful possession. England, before long, this Island of ours, will hold but a small fraction of the English: in America, in New Holland, east and west to the very Antipodes, there will be a Saxondom covering great spaces of the Globe. And now, what is it that can keep all these together into virtually one Nation, so that they do not fall-out and fight, but live at peace, in brotherlike intercourse, helping one another? This is justly regarded as the greatest practical problem, the thing all manner of sovereignties and governments are here to accomplish: what is it that will accomplish this? Acts of Parliament, administrative prime-ministers cannot. America is parted from us, so far as Parliament could part it. Call it not fantastic, for there is much reality in it: Here, I say, is an English King, whom no time or chance, Parliament or combination of Parliaments, can dethrone! This King Shakspeare, does not he shine, in crowned sovereignty, over us all, as the noblest, gentlest, yet strongest of rallying-signs; *in*destructible; really more valuable in that point of view than any other means or appliance whatsoever? We can fancy him as radiant aloft over all the Nations of Englishmen, a thousand years hence. From Paramatta, from New York, wheresoever, under what sort of Parish-Constable soever, English men and women are, they will say to one another: "Yes, this Shakspeare is ours; we produced him, we speak and think by him; we are of one blood and kind with him." The most common-sense politician, too, if he pleases, may think of that.

Yes, truly, it is a great thing for a Nation that it get an articulate voice; that it produce a man who will speak-forth melodiously what the heart of it means! Italy, for example, poor Italy lies dismembered, scattered asunder, not appearing in any protocol or treaty as a unity at all; yet the noble Italy is actually *one*: Italy produced its Dante; Italy can speak! The Czar of all the Russias, he is strong, with so many bayonets, Cossacks, and cannons; and does a great feat in keeping such a tract of Earth politically together; but he cannot yet speak. Something great in him, but it is a dumb greatness. He has had no voice of genius, to be heard of all men and times. He must learn to speak. He is a great dumb monster hitherto. His cannons and Cossacks will all have rusted into nonentity, while that Dante's voice is still audible. The Nation that has a Dante is bound together as no dumb Russia can be.—We must here end what we had to say of the *Hero-Poet*.

From

PAST AND PRESENT

PAST AND PRESENT

[1843]

BOOK I

PROEM

CHAPTER I

MIDAS

THE condition of England, on which many pamphlets are now in the course of publication, and many thoughts unpublished are going on in every reflective head, is justly regarded as one of the most ominous, and withal one of the strangest, ever seen in this world. England is full of wealth, of multifarious produce, supply for human want in every kind; yet England is dying of inanition. With unabated bounty the land of England blooms and grows; waving with yellow harvests; thick-studded with workshops, industrial implements, with fifteen millions of workers, understood to be the strongest, the cunningest and the willingest our Earth ever had; these men are here; the work they have done, the fruit they have realised is here, abundant, exuberant on every hand of us: and behold, some baleful fiat as of Enchantment has gone forth, saying, "Touch it not, ye workers, ye master-workers, ye master-idlers; none of you can touch it, no man of you shall be the better for it; this is enchanted fruit!" On the poor workers such fiat falls first, in its rudest shape; but on the rich master-workers too it falls; neither can the rich master-idlers, nor any richest or highest man escape, but all are like to be brought low with it, and made "poor" enough, in the money sense or a far fataler one.

Of these successful skilful workers some two millions, it is now counted, sit in Workhouses, Poor-law Prisons; or have "out-door relief" flung over the wall to them,—the workhouse Bastille being filled to bursting, and the strong Poor-law broken asunder by a stronger.[1] They sit there, these many months now; their hope of deliverance as yet small. In workhouses, pleasantly so-named, because work cannot be done in them. Twelve-hundred-thousand workers in England alone; their cunning right-hand lamed, lying idle in their sorrowful bosom; their hopes, outlooks, share of this fair world, shut-in by narrow walls. They sit there, pent up, as in a kind of horrid enchantment; glad to be imprisoned and enchanted, that they may not perish starved. The picturesque Tourist, in a sunny autumn day, through this bounteous realm of England, descries the Union Workhouse on his path. "Passing by the Workhouse of St. Ives in Huntingdonshire, on a bright day last autumn," says the picturesque Tourist, "I saw sitting on wooden benches, in front of their Bastille and within their ring-wall and its railings, some half-hundred or more of these men. Tall robust figures, young mostly or of middle age; of honest countenance, many of them thoughtful and even intelligent-looking men. They sat there, near by one another; but in a kind of torpor, especially in a silence, which was very striking. In silence: for, alas, what word was to be said? An Earth all lying round, crying, Come and till me, come and reap me;—yet we here sit enchanted! In the eyes and brows of these men hung the gloomiest expression, not of anger, but of grief and shame and manifold inarticulate distress and weariness; they returned my glance with a glance that seemed to say, 'Do not look at us. We sit enchanted here, we know not why. The Sun shines and the Earth calls; and, by the governing Powers and Impotences of this England, we are forbidden to obey. It is impossible, they tell us!' There was something that reminded me of Dante's Hell in the look of all this; and I rode swiftly away."

So many hundred thousands sit in workhouses: and other hundred thousands have not yet got even workhouses; and in thrifty Scotland itself, in Glasgow or Edinburgh City, in their dark lanes, hidden from all but

[1] The Return of Paupers for England and Wales, at Ladyday 1842 is, "Indoor 221,687, Out-door 1,207,402, Total 1,429,089." *Official Report.*

the eye of God, and of rare Benevolence the minister of God, there are scenes of woe and destitution and desolation, such as, one may hope, the Sun never saw before in the most barbarous regions where men dwelt. Competent witnesses, the brave and humane Dr. Alison, who speaks what he knows, whose noble Healing Art in his charitable hands becomes once more a truly sacred one, report these things for us: these things are not of this year, or of last year, have no reference to our present state of commercial stagnation, but only to the common state. Not in sharp feverfits, but in chronic gangrene of this kind is Scotland suffering. A Poor-law, any and every Poor-law, it may be observed, is but a temporary measure; an anodyne, not a remedy: Rich and Poor, when once the naked facts of their condition have come into collision, cannot long subsist together on a mere Poor-law. True enough:—and yet, human beings cannot be left to die! Scotland too, till something better come, must have a Poor-law, if Scotland is not to be a byword among the nations. O, what a waste is there; of noble and thrice-noble national virtues; peasant Stoicisms, Heroisms; valiant manful habits, soul of a Nation's worth,—which all the metal of Potosi cannot purchase back; to which the metal of Potosi, and all you can buy with *it*, is dross and dust!

Why dwell on this aspect of the matter? It is too indisputable, not doubtful now to any one. Descend where you will into the lower class, in Town or Country, by what avenue you will, by Factory Inquiries, Agricultural Inquiries, by Revenue Returns, by Mining-Labourer Committees, by opening your own eyes and looking, the same sorrowful result discloses itself: you have to admit that the working body of this rich English Nation has sunk or is fast sinking into a state, to which, all sides of it considered, there was literally never any parallel. At Stockport Assizes,—and this too has no reference to the present state of trade, being of date prior to that,—a Mother and a Father are arraigned and found guilty of poisoning three of their children, to defraud a "burial-society" of some 3*l*. 8*s*. due on the death of each child: they are arraigned, found guilty; and the official authorities, it is whispered, hint that perhaps the case is not solitary, that perhaps you had better not probe farther into that department of things. This is in the autumn of 1841; the crime itself is of the previous year or season. "Brutal savages, degraded

Irish," mutters the idle reader of Newspapers; hardly lingering on this incident. Yet it is an incident worth lingering on; the depravity, savagery and degraded Irishism being never so well admitted. In the British land, a human Mother and Father, of white skin and professing the Christian religion, had done this thing; they, with their Irishism and necessity and savagery, had been driven to do it. Such instances are like the highest mountain apex emerged into view; under which lies a whole mountain region and land, not yet emerged. A human Mother and Father had said to themselves, What shall we do to escape starvation? We are deep sunk here, in our dark cellar; and help is far.— Yes, in the Ugolino Hunger-tower stern things happen; best-loved little Gaddo fallen dead on his Father's knees!— The Stockport Mother and Father think and hint: Our poor little starveling Tom, who cries all day for victuals, who will see only evil and not good in this world: if he were out of misery at once; he well dead, and the rest of us perhaps kept alive? It is thought, and hinted; at last it is done. And now Tom being killed, and all spent and eaten, Is it poor little starveling Jack that must go, or poor little starveling Will? — What a committee of ways and means!

In starved sieged cities, in the uttermost doomed ruin of old Jerusalem fallen under the wrath of God, it was prophesied and said, "The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children." The stern Hebrew imagination could conceive no blacker gulf of wretchedness; that was the ultimatum of degraded god-punished man. And we here, in modern England, exuberant with supply of all kinds, besieged by nothing if it be not by invisible Enchantments, are we reaching that?——How come these things? Wherefore are they, wherefore should they be?

Nor are they of the St. Ives workhouses, of the Glasgow lanes, and Stockport cellars, the only unblessed among us. This successful industry of England, with its plethoric wealth, has as yet made nobody rich; it is an enchanted wealth, and belongs yet to nobody. We might ask, Which of us has it enriched? We can spend thousands where we once spent hundreds; but can purchase nothing good with them. In Poor and Rich, instead of noble thrift and plenty, there is idle luxury alternating with mean scarcity and inability. We have sumptuous garnitures for our Life, but

have forgotten to *live* in the middle of them. It is an enchanted wealth ; no man of us can yet touch it. The class of men who feel that they are truly better off by means of it, let them give us their name !

Many men eat finer cookery, drink dearer liquors,—with what advantage they can report, and their Doctors can : but in the heart of them, if we go out of the dyspeptic stomach, what increase of blessedness is there ? Are they better, beautifuler, stronger, braver ? Are they even what they call " happier " ? Do they look with satisfaction on more things and human faces in this God's-Earth ; do more things and human faces look with satisfaction on them ? Not so. Human faces gloom discordantly, disloyally on one another. Things, if it be not mere cotton and iron things, are growing disobedient to man. The Master Worker is enchanted, for the present, like his Workhouse Workman ; clamours, in vain hitherto, for a very simple sort of " Liberty " : the liberty " to buy where he finds it cheapest, to sell where he finds it dearest." With guineas jingling in every pocket, he was no whit richer ; but now, the very guineas threatening to vanish, he feels that he is poor indeed. Poor Master Worker ! And the Master Unworker, is not he in a still fataler situation ? Pausing amid his game-preserves, with awful eye,—as he well may ! Coercing fifty-pound tenants ; coercing, bribing, cajoling ; " doing what he likes with his own." His mouth full of loud futilities, and arguments to prove the excellence of his Corn-law ; and in his heart the blackest misgiving, a desperate half-consciousness that his excellent Corn-law is *in*defensible, that his loud arguments for it are of a kind to strike men too literally *dumb*.

To whom, then, is this wealth of England wealth ? Who is it that it blesses ; makes happier, wiser, beautifuler, in any way better ? Who has got hold of it, to make it fetch and carry for him, like a true servant, not like a false mock-servant ; to do him any real service whatsoever ? As yet no one. We have more riches than any Nation ever had before ; we have less good of them than any Nation ever had before. Our successful industry is hitherto unsuccessful ; a strange success, if we stop here ! In the midst of plethoric plenty, the people perish ; with gold walls, and full barns, no man feels himself safe or satisfied. Workers, Master Workers, Unworkers, all men, come to a pause ; stand fixed, and cannot farther. Fatal paralysis spreading inwards,

from the extremities, in St. Ives workhouses, in Stockport cellars, through all limbs, as if towards the heart itself. Have we actually got enchanted, then ; accursed by some god ?—

Midas longed for gold, and insulted the Olympians. He got gold, so that whatsoever he touched became gold,—and he, with his long ears, was little the better for it. Midas had misjudged the celestial music-tones ; Midas had insulted Apollo and the gods : the gods gave him his wish, and a pair of long ears, which also were a good appendage to it. What a truth in these old Fables !

BOOK III

THE MODERN WORKER

CHAPTER XI

LABOUR

For there is a perennial nobleness, and even sacredness, in Work. Were he never so benighted, forgetful of his high calling, there is always hope in a man that actually and earnestly works: in Idleness alone is there perpetual despair. Work, never so Mammonish, mean, *is* in communication with Nature; the real desire to get Work done will itself lead one more and more to truth, to Nature's appointments and regulations, which are truth.

The latest Gospel in this world is, Know thy work and do it. "Know thyself": long enough has that poor "self" of thine tormented thee; thou wilt never get to "know" it, I believe! Think it not thy business, this of knowing thyself; thou art an unknowable individual: know what thou canst work at; and work at it, like a Hercules! That will be thy better plan.

It has been written, "an endless significance lies in Work;" a man perfects himself by working. Foul jungles are cleared away, fair seedfields rise instead, and stately cities; and withal the man himself first ceases to be a jungle and foul unwholesome desert thereby. Consider how, even in the meanest sorts of Labour, the whole soul of a man is composed into a kind of real harmony, the instant he sets himself to work! Doubt, Desire, Sorrow, Remorse, Indignation, Despair itself, all these like helldogs lie beleaguering the soul of the poor day-worker, as of every man: but he bends himself with free valour against his task, and all these are stilled, all these shrink murmuring far off into their caves. The man is now a man. The

blessed glow of Labour in him, is it not as purifying fire, wherein all poison is burnt up, and of sour smoke itself there is made bright blessed flame!

Destiny, on the whole, has no other way of cultivating us. A formless Chaos, once set it *revolving*, grows round and ever rounder; ranges itself, by mere force of gravity, into strata, spherical courses; is no longer a Chaos, but a round compacted World. What would become of the Earth, did she cease to revolve? In the poor old Earth, so long as she revolves, all inequalities, irregularities disperse themselves; all irregularities are incessantly becoming regular. Hast thou looked on the Potter's wheel,—one of the venerablest objects; old as the Prophet Ezechiel and far older? Rude lumps of clay, how they spin themselves up, by mere quick whirling, into beautiful circular dishes. And fancy the most assiduous Potter, but without his wheel; reduced to make dishes, or rather amorphous botches, by mere kneading and baking! Even such a Potter were Destiny, with a human soul that would rest and lie at ease, that would not work and spin! Of an idle unrevolving man the kindest Destiny, like the most assiduous Potter without wheel, can bake and knead nothing other than a botch; let her spend on him what expensive colouring, what gilding and enamelling she will, he is but a botch. Not a dish; no, a bulging, kneaded, crooked, shambling, squint-cornered, amorphous botch,—a mere enamelled vessel of dishonour! Let the idle think of this.

Blessed is he who has found his work; let him ask no other blessedness. He has a work, a life-purpose; he has found it, and will follow it! How, as a free-flowing channel, dug and torn by noble force through the sour mud-swamp of one's existence, like an ever-deepening river there, it runs and flows;—draining-off the sour festering water, gradually from the root of the remotest grass-blade; making, instead of pestilential swamp, a green fruitful meadow with its clear-flowing stream. How blessed for the meadow itself, let the stream and *its* value be great or small! Labour is Life: from the inmost heart of the Worker rises his god-given Force, the sacred celestial Life-essence breathed into him by Almighty God; from his inmost heart awakens him to all nobleness,—to all knowledge, "self-knowledge" and much else, so soon as Work fitly begins. Knowledge? The knowledge that will hold good in working, cleave thou to that; for Nature herself

accredits that, says Yea to that. Properly thou hast no other knowledge but what thou hast got by working: the rest is yet all a hypothesis of knowledge; a thing to be argued of in schools, a thing floating in the clouds, in endless logic-vortices, till we try it and fix it. "Doubt, of whatever kind, can be ended by Action alone."

And again, hast thou valued Patience, Courage, Perseverance, Openness to light; readiness to own thyself mistaken, to do better next time? All these, all virtues, in wrestling with the dim brute Powers of Fact, in ordering of thy fellows in such wrestle, there and elsewhere not at all, thou wilt continually learn. Set down a brave Sir Christopher in the middle of black ruined Stone-heaps, of foolish unarchitectural Bishops, redtape Officials, idle Nell-Gwyn Defenders of the Faith; and see whether he will ever raise a Paul's Cathedral out of all that, yea or no! Rough, rude, contradictory are all things and persons, from the mutinous masons and Irish hodmen, up to the idle Nell-Gwyn Defenders, to blustering redtape Officials, foolish unarchitectural Bishops. All these things and persons are there not for Christopher's sake and his Cathedral's; they are there for their own sake mainly! Christopher will have to conquer and constrain all these,—if he be able. All these are against him. Equitable Nature herself, who carries her mathematics and architectonics not on the face of her, but deep in the hidden heart of her,—Nature herself is but partially for him; will be wholly against him, if he constrain her not! His very money, where is it to come from? The pious munificence of England lies far-scattered, distant, unable to speak, and say, "I am here";—must be spoken to before it can speak. Pious munificence, and all help, is so silent, invisible like the gods; impediment, contradictions manifold are so loud and near! O brave Sir Christopher, trust thou in those notwithstanding, and front all these; understand all these; by valiant patience, noble effort, insight, by man's-strength, vanquish and compel all these,—and, on the whole, strike down victoriously the last topstone of that Paul's Edifice; thy monument for certain centuries, the stamp "Great Man" impressed very legibly on Portland-stone there!—

Yes, all manner of help, and pious response from Men or Nature, is always what we call silent; cannot speak or come to light, till it be seen, till it be spoken to. Every

noble work is at first "impossible." In very truth, for every noble work the possibilities will lie diffused through Immensity; inarticulate, undiscoverable except to faith. Like Gideon thou shalt spread out thy fleece at the door of thy tent; see whether under the wide arch of Heaven there be any bounteous moisture, or none. Thy heart and life-purpose shall be as a miraculous Gideon's fleece, spread out in silent appeal to Heaven: and from the kind Immensities, what from the poor unkind Localities and town and country Parishes there never could, blessed dew-moisture to suffice thee shall have fallen!

Work is of a religious nature:—work is of a *brave* nature; which it is the aim of all religion to be. All work of man is as the swimmer's: a waste ocean threatens to devour him; if he front it not bravely, it will keep its word. By incessant wise defiance of it, lusty rebuke and buffet of it, behold how it loyally supports him, bears him as its conqueror along. "It is so," says Goethe, "with all things that man undertakes in this world."

Brave Sea-captain, Norse Sea-king,—Columbus, my hero, royalest Sea-king of all! it is no friendly environment this of thine, in the waste deep waters; around thee mutinous discouraged souls, behind thee disgrace and ruin, before thee the unpenetrated veil of Night. Brother, these wild water-mountains, bounding from their deep bases (ten miles deep, I am told), are not entirely there on thy behalf! Meseems *they* have other work than floating thee forward:—and the huge Winds, that sweep from Ursa Major to the Tropics and Equators, dancing their giant-waltz through the kingdoms of Chaos and Immensity, they care little about filling rightly or filling wrongly the small shoulder-of-mutton sails in this cockle-skiff of thine! Thou art not among articulate-speaking friends, my brother; thou art among immeasurable dumb monsters, tumbling, howling wide as the world here. Secret, far off, invisible to all hearts but thine, there lies a help in them: see how thou wilt get at that. Patiently thou wilt wait till the mad South-wester spend itself, saving thyself by dextrous science of defence, the while: valiantly, with swift decision, wilt thou strike in, when the favouring East, the Possible, springs up. Mutiny of men thou wilt sternly repress; weakness, despondency, thou wilt cheerily encourage: thou wilt swallow down complaint, unreason, weariness, weakness of others and thyself;—how much wilt thou swallow down!

There shall be a depth of Silence in thee, deeper than this Sea, which is but ten miles deep : a Silence unsoundable ; known to God only. Thou shalt be a Great man. Yes, my World-Soldier, thou of the World Marine-service,—thou wilt have to be *greater* than this tumultuous unmeasured World here round thee is : thou, in thy strong soul, as with wrestler's arms, shalt embrace it, harness it down ; and make it bear thee on,—to new Americas, or whither God wills !

CHAPTER XII

REWARD

"RELIGION," I said; for, properly speaking, all true Work is Religion: and whatsoever Religion is not Work may go and dwell among the Brahmins, Antinomians, Spinning Dervishes, or where it will; with me it shall have no harbour. Admirable was that of the old Monks, "*Laborare est Orare*, Work is Worship."

Older than all preached Gospels was this unpreached, inarticulate, but ineradicable, forever-enduring Gospel: Work, and therein have wellbeing. Man, Son of Earth and of Heaven, lies there not, in the innermost heart of thee, a Spirit of active Method, a Force for Work;—and burns like a painfully-smouldering fire, giving thee no rest till thou unfold it, till thou write it down in beneficent Facts around thee! What is immethodic, waste, thou shalt make methodic, regulated, arable; obedient and productive to thee. Wheresoever thou findest Disorder, there is thy eternal enemy; attack him swiftly, subdue him; make Order of him, the subject not of Chaos, but of Intelligence, Divinity and Thee! The thistle that grows in thy path, dig it out, that a blade of useful grass, a drop of nourishing milk, may grow there instead. The waste cotton-shrub, gather its waste white down, spin it, weave it; that, in place of idle litter, there may be folded webs, and the naked skin of man be covered.

But above all, where thou findest Ignorance, Stupidity, Brute-mindedness,—yes, there, with or without Church-tithes and Shovel-hat, with or without Talfourd-Mahon Copyrights, or were it with mere dungeons and gibbets and crosses, attack it, I say; smite it wisely, unweariedly, and rest not while thou livest and it lives; but smite, smite, in the name of God! The Highest God, as I understand it, does audibly so command thee; still audibly, if thou have ears to hear. He, even He, with his *un*spoken voice, awfuler

than any Sinai thunders or syllabled speech of Whirlwinds; for the SILENCE of deep Eternities, of Worlds from beyond the morning-stars, does it not speak to thee? The unborn Ages; the old Graves, with their long-mouldering dust, the very tears that wetted it now all dry,—do not these speak to thee, what ear hath not heard? The deep Death-kingdoms, the Stars in their never-resting courses, all Space and all Time, proclaim it to thee in continual silent admonition. Thou too, if ever man should, shalt work while it is called Today. For the Night cometh, wherein no man can work.

All true Work is sacred; in all true Work, were it but true hand-labour, there is something of divineness. Labour, wide as the Earth, has its summit in Heaven. Sweat of the brow; and up from that to sweat of the brain, sweat of the heart; which includes all Kepler calculations. Newton meditations, all Sciences, all spoken Epics, all acted Heroisms, Martyrdoms,—up to that "Agony of bloody sweat," which all men have called divine! O brother, if this is not "worship," then I say, the more pity for worship; for this is the noblest thing yet discovered under God's sky. Who art thou that complainest of thy life of toil? Complain not. Look up, my wearied brother; see thy fellow Workmen there, in God's Eternity; surviving there, they alone surviving: sacred Band of the Immortals, celestial Bodyguard of the Empire of Mankind. Even in the weak Human Memory they survive so long, as saints, as heroes, as gods; they alone surviving; peopling, they alone, the unmeasured solitudes of Time! To thee Heaven, though severe, is *not* unkind; Heaven is kind,—as a noble Mother; as that Spartan Mother, saying while she gave her son his shield, "With it, my son, or upon it!" Thou too shalt return *home* in honour; to thy far-distant Home, in honour; doubt it not,—if in the battle thou keep thy shield! Thou, in the Eternities and deepest Death-kingdoms, are not an alien; thou everywhere art a denizen! Complain not; the very Spartans did not *complain*.

And who art thou that braggest of thy life of Idleness; complacently showest thy bright gilt equipages; sumptuous cushions; appliances for folding of the hands to mere sleep? Looking up, looking down, around, behind or before, discernest thou, if it be not in Mayfair alone, any *idle* hero, saint, god, or even devil? Not a vestige of one. In the Heavens, in the Earth, in the Waters under the Earth, is

none like unto thee. Thou art an original figure in this Creation; a denizen in Mayfair alone, in this extraordinary Century or Half-Century alone! One monster there is in the world: the idle man. What is his "Religion"? That Nature is a Phantasm, where cunning beggary or thievery may sometimes find good victual. That God is a lie; and that Man and his Life are a lie.—Alas, alas, who of us *is* there that can say, I have worked? The faithfulest of us are unprofitable servants; the faithfulest of us know that best. The faithfulest of us may say, with sad and true old Samuel, "Much of my life has been trifled away!" But he that has, and except "on public occasions" professes to have, no function but that of going idle in a graceful or gracious manner; and of begetting sons to go idle; and to address Chief Spinners and Diggers, who at least *are* spinning and digging, "Ye scandalous persons who produce too much"—My Corn-Law friends, on what imaginary still richer Eldorados, and true iron-spikes with law of gravitation, are ye rushing!

As to the Wages of Work there might innumerable things be said; there will and must yet innumerable things be said and spoken, in St. Stephen's and out of St. Stephen's; and gradually not a few things be ascertained and written, on Law-parchment, concerning this very matter:—"Fair day's-wages for a fair day's-work" is the most unrefusable demand! Money-wages "to the extent of keeping your worker alive that he may work more"; these, unless you mean to dismiss him straightway out of this world, are indispensable alike to the noblest Worker and to the least noble!

One thing only I will say here, in special reference to the former class, the noble and noblest; but throwing light on all the other classes and their arrangements of this difficult matter: The "wages" of every noble Work do yet lie in Heaven or else Nowhere. Not in Bank-of-England bills, in Owen's Labour-bank, or any the most improved establishment of banking and money-changing, needest thou, heroic soul, present thy account of earnings. Human banks and labour-banks know thee not; or know thee after generations and centuries have passed away, and thou art clean gone from "rewarding,"—all manner of bank-drafts, shop-tills, and Downing-street Exchequers lying very invisible, so far from thee! Nay, at bottom, dost thou need

any reward ? Was it thy aim and life-purpose to be filled with good things for thy heroism ; to have a life of pomp and ease, and be what men call " happy," in this world or in any other world ? I answer for thee deliberately, No. The whole spiritual secret of the new epoch lies in this, that thou canst answer for thyself, with thy whole clearness of head and heart, deliberately, No !

My brother, the brave man has to give his Life away. Give it, I advise thee ;—thou dost not expect to *sell* thy Life in an adequate manner ? What price, for example, would content thee ? The just price of thy LIFE to thee,—why, God's entire Creation to thyself, the whole Universe of Space, the whole Eternity of Time, and what they hold : that is the price which would content thee ; that, and if thou wilt be candid, nothing short of that ! It is thy all ; and for it thou wouldst have all. Thou art an unreasonable mortal ;—or rather thou art a poor *infinite* mortal, who, in thy narrow clay-prison here, *seemest* so unreasonable ! Thou wilt never sell thy Life, or any part of thy Life, in a satisfactory manner. Give it, like a royal heart ; let the price be Nothing : thou *hast* then, in a certain sense, got All for it ! The heroic man,—and is not every man, God be thanked, a potential hero ?—has to do so, in all times and circumstances. In the most heroic age, as in the most unheroic, he will have to say, as Burns said proudly and humbly of his little Scottish Songs, little dewdrops of Celestial Melody in an age when so much was unmelodious : " By Heaven, they shall either be invaluable or of no value ; I do not need your guineas for them ! " It is an element which should, and must, enter deeply into all settlements of wages here below. They never will be " satisfactory " otherwise ; they cannot, O Mammon Gospel, they never can ! Money for my little piece of work " to the extent that will allow me to keep working " ; yes, this,—unless you mean that I shall go my ways *before* the work is all taken out of me ; but as to " wages "—!—

On the whole, we do entirely agree with those old Monks, *Laborare est Orare*. In a thousand senses, from one end of it to the other, true Work *is* Worship. He that works, whatsoever be his work, he bodies forth the form of Things Unseen ; a small Poet every Worker is. The idea, were it but of his poor Delf Platter, how much more of his Epic Poem, is as yet " seen," half-seen, only by himself ; to all others it is a thing unseen, impossible ; to Nature herself

it is a thing unseen, a thing which never hitherto was ;—very "impossible," for it is as yet a No-thing ! The Unseen Powers had need to watch over such a man ; he works in and for the Unseen. Alas, if he look to the Seen Powers only, he may as well quit the business ; his No-thing will never rightly issue as a Thing, but as a Deceptivity, a Sham-thing,—which it had better not do !

Thy No-thing of an Intended Poem, O Poet who hast looked merely to reviewers, copyrights, booksellers, popularities, behold it has not yet become a Thing ; for the truth is not in it ! Though printed, hotpressed, reviewed, celebrated, sold to the twentieth edition : what is all that ? The Thing, in philosophical uncommercial language, is still a No-thing, mostly semblance and deception of the sight ;—benign Oblivion incessantly gnawing at it, impatient till Chaos, to which it belongs, do reabsorb it !—

He who takes not counsel of the Unseen and Silent, from him will never come real visibility and speech. Thou must descend to the *Mothers*, to the *Manes*, and Hercules-like long suffer and labour there, wouldst thou emerge with victory into the sunlight. As in battle and the shock of war,—for is not this a battle ?—thou too shalt fear no pain or death, shalt love no ease or life ; the voice of festive Lubberlands, the noise of greedy Acheron shall alike lie silent under thy victorious feet. Thy work, like Dante's, shall "make thee lean for many years." The world and its wages, its criticisms, counsels, helps, impediments, shall be as a waste ocean-flood ; the chaos through which thou art to swim and sail. Not the waste waves and their weedy gulf-streams, shalt thou take for guidance : thy star alone, —"*Se tu sequi tua stella !*" Thy star alone, now clear-beaming over Chaos, nay now by fits gone out, disastrously eclipsed : this only shalt thou strive to follow. O, it is a business, as I fancy, that of weltering your way through Chaos and the murk of Hell ! Green-eyed dragons watching you, three-headed Cerberuses,—not without sympathy of *their* sort ! "*Eccovi l' uom ch' è stato all' Inferno.*" For in fine, as Poet Dryden says, you do walk hand in hand with sheer Madness, all the way,—who is by no means pleasant company ! You look fixedly into Madness, and *her* undiscovered, boundless, bottomless Night-empire ; that you may extort new Wisdom out of it, as an Eurydice from Tartarus. The higher the Wisdom, the closer was its neighbourhood and kindred with mere Insanity ; literally so ;—

and thou wilt, with a speechless feeling, observe how highest Wisdom, struggling up into this world, has oftentimes carried such tinctures and adhesions of Insanity still cleaving to it hither!

All Works, each in their degree, are a making of Madness sane;—truly enough a religious operation; which cannot be carried on without religion. You have not work otherwise; you have eye-service, greedy grasping of wages, swift and ever swifter manufacture of semblances to get hold of wages. Instead of better felt-hats to cover your head, you have bigger lath-and-plaster hats set travelling the streets on wheels. Instead of heavenly and earthly Guidance for the souls of men, you have "Black or White Surplice" Controversies, stuffed hair-and-leather Popes;—terrestrial *Law-wards*, Lords and Law-bringers, "organising Labour" in these years, by passing Corn-Laws. With all which, alas, this distracted Earth is now full, nigh to bursting. Semblances most smooth to the touch and eye; most accursed, nevertheless, to body and soul. Semblances, be they of Sham-woven Cloth or of Dilettante Legislation, which are *not* real wool or substance, but Devil's-dust, accursed of God and man! No man has worked, or can work, except religiously; not even the poor day-labourer, the weaver of your coat, the sewer of your shoes. All men, if they work not as in a Great Taskmaster's eye, will work wrong, work unhappily for themselves and you.

Industrial work, still under bondage to Mammon, the rational soul of it not yet awakened, is a tragic spectacle. Men in the rapidest motion and self-motion; restless, with convulsive energy, as if driven by Galvanism, as if possessed by a Devil; tearing asunder mountains,—to no purpose, for Mammonism is always Midas-cared! This is sad, on the face of it. Yet courage: the beneficent Destinies, kind in their sternness, are apprising us that this cannot continue. Labour is not a devil, even while encased in Mammonism; Labour is ever an imprisoned god, writhing unconsciously or consciously to escape out of Mammonism! Plugson of Undershot, like Taillefer of Normandy, wants victory; how much happier will even Plugson be to have a chivalrous victory than a Chactaw one! The unredeemed ugliness is that of a slothful People. Show me a People energetically busy; heaving, struggling, all shoulders at the wheel; their heart pulsing, every muscle swelling, with man's energy and will;—I show you a People of whom great good

is already predicable ; to whom all manner of good is yet certain, if their energy endure. By very working, they will learn ; they have, Antæus-like, their foot on Mother Fact : how can they but learn ?

The vulgarest Plugson of a Master-Worker, who can command Workers, and get work out of them, is already a considerable man. Blessed and thrice-blessed symptoms I discern of Master-Workers who are not vulgar men ; who are Nobles, and begin to feel that they must act as such : all speed to these, they are England's hope at present ! But in this Plugson himself, conscious of almost no nobleness whatever, how much is there ! Not without man's faculty, insight, courage, hard energy, is this rugged figure. His words none of the wisest ; but his actings cannot be altogether foolish. Think, how were it, stoodst thou suddenly in his shoes ! He has to command a thousand men. And not imaginary commanding ; no, it is real, incessantly practical. The evil passions of so many men (with the Devil in them, as in all of us) he has to vanquish ; by manifold force of speech and of silence, to repress or evade. What a force of silence, to say nothing of the others, is in Plugson ! For these his thousand men he has to provide raw-material, machinery, arrangement, houseroom ; and ever at the week's end, wages by due sale. No Civil-List, or Goulburn-Baring Budget has he to fall back upon, for paying of his regiment ; he has to pick his supplies from the confused face of the whole Earth and Contemporaneous History, by his dexterity alone. There will be dry eyes if he fail to do it !—He exclaims, at present, " black in the face," near strangled with Dilettante Legislation ; " Let me have elbow-room, throat-room, and I will not fail ! No, I will spin yet, and conquer like a giant : what ' sinews of war ' lie in me, untold resources toward the Conquest of this Planet, if instead of hanging me, you husband them, and help me ! "—My indomitable friend, it is *true* ; and thou shalt and must be helped.

This is not a man I would kill and strangle by Corn-Laws, even if I could ! No, I would fling my Corn-Laws and Shot-belts to the Devil ; and try to help this man. I would teach him, by noble precept and law-precept, by noble example most of all, that Mammonism was not the essence of his or of my station in God's Universe ; but the adscititious excrescence of it ; the gross, terrene, godless embodiment of it ; which would have to become, more or

less, a godlike one. By noble *real* legislation, by true *noble's*-work, by unwearied, valiant, and were it wageless effort, in my Parliament and in my Parish, I would aid, constrain, encourage him to effect more or less this blessed change. I should know that it would have to be effected ; that unless it were in some measure effected, he and I and all of us, I first and soonest of all, were doomed to perdition ! —Effected it will be ; unless it were a Demon that made this Universe ; which I, for my own part, do at no moment, under no form, in the least believe.

May it please your Serene Highnesses, your Majesties, Lordships and Law-wardships, the proper Epic of this world is not now " Arms and the Man " ; how much less, " Shirt-frills and the Man " : no, it is now " Tools and the Man " : that, henceforth to all time, is now our Epic ;— and you, first of all others, I think, were wise to take note of that !

CHAPTER XIII

DEMOCRACY

If the Serene Highnesses and Majesties do not take note of that, then, as I perceive, *that* will take note of itself! The time for levity, insincerity, and idle babble and play-acting, in all kinds, is gone by; it is a serious, grave time. Old long-vexed questions, not yet solved in logical words or parliamentary laws, are fast solving themselves in facts, somewhat unblessed to behold! This largest of questions, this question of Work and Wages, which ought, had we heeded Heaven's voice, to have begun two generations ago or more, cannot be delayed longer without hearing Earth's voice. "Labour" will verily need to be somewhat "organised," as they say,—God knows with what difficulty. Man will actually need to have his debts and earnings a little better paid by man; which, let Parliaments speak of them or be silent of them, are eternally his due from man, and cannot, without penalty and at length not without death-penalty, be withheld. How much ought to cease among us straightway; how much ought to begin straightway, while the hours yet are!

Truly they are strange results to which this of leaving all to "Cash"; of quietly shutting-up the God's Temple, and gradually opening wide-open the Mammon's Temple, with "Laissez-faire, and Every man for himself,"—have led us in these days! We have Upper, speaking Classes, who indeed do "speak" as never man spake before; the withered flimsiness, the godless baseness and barrenness of whose Speech might of itself indicate what kind of Doing and practical Governing went on under it! For speech is the gaseous element out of which most kinds of Practice and Performance, especially all kinds of moral Performance, condense themselves, and take shape; as the one is, so will the other be. Descending, accordingly, into the Dumb Class in its Stockport Cellars and Poor-Law Bastilles, have we

not to announce that they also are hitherto unexampled in the History of Adam's Posterity ?

Life was never a May-game for men : in all times the lot of the dumb millions born to toil was defaced with manifold sufferings, injustices, heavy burdens, avoidable and unavoidable ; not play at all, but hard work that made the sinews sore and the heart sore. As bond-slaves, *villani, bordarii, sochemanni,* nay indeed as dukes, earls and kings, men were oftentimes made weary of their life ; and had to say, in the sweat of their brow and of their soul, Behold, it is not sport, it is grim earnest, and our back can bear no more ! Who knows not what massacrings and harryings there have been ; grinding, long-continuing, unbearable injustices,—till the heart had to rise in madness, and some "*Eu Sachsen, nimith euer sachses,* You Saxons, out with your gully-knives, then !" You Saxons, some "arrestment," partial "arrestment of the Knaves and Dastards" has become indispensable !—The page of Dryasdust is heavy with such details.

And yet I will venture to believe that in no time, since the beginnings of Society, was the lot of those same dumb millions of toilers so entirely unbearable as it is even in the days now passing over us. It is not to die, or even to die of hunger, that makes a man wretched ; many men have died ; all men must die,—the last exit of us all is in a Fire-Chariot of Pain. But it is to live miserable we know not why ; to work sore and yet gain nothing ; to be heart-worn, weary, yet isolated, unrelated, girt-in with a cold universal Laissez-faire : it is to die slowly all our life long, imprisoned in a deaf, dead, Infinite Injustice, as in the accursed iron belly of a Phalaris' Bull ! This is and remains forever intolerable to all men whom God has made. Do we wonder at French Revolutions, Chartisms, Revolts of Three Days ? The times, if we will consider them, are really unexampled.

Never before did I hear of an Irish Widow reduced to "prove her sisterhood by dying of typhus-fever and infecting seventeen persons,"—saying in such undeniable way, "You *see* I was your sister !" Sisterhood, brotherhood, was often forgotten ; but not till the rise of these ultimate Mammon and Shotbelt Gospels did I ever see it so expressly denied. If no pious Lord or *Law-ward* would remember it, always some pious Lady ("*Hlaf-dig,*" Benefactress, "*Loaf-giveress,*" they say she is,—blessings on her beautiful heart !) was there, with mild mother-voice

and hand, to remember it; some pious thoughtful *Elder*, what we now call "Prester," *Presbyter* or "Priest," was there to put all men in mind of it, in the name of the God who had made all.

Not even in Black Dahomey was it ever, I think, forgotten to the typhus-fever length. Mungo Park, resourceless, had sunk down to die under the Negro Village-Tree, a horrible White object in the eyes of all. But in the poor Black Woman, and her daughter who stood aghast at him, whose earthly wealth and funded capital consisted of one small calabash of rice, there lived a heart richer than *Laissez-faire*: they, with a royal munificence, boiled their rice for him; they sang all night to him, spinning assiduous on their cotton distaffs, as he lay to sleep: "Let us pity the poor white man; no mother has he to fetch him milk, no sister to grind him corn!" Thou poor black Noble One, —thou *Lady* too: did not a God make thee too; was there not in thee too something of a God!—

Gurth, born thrall of Cedric the Saxon, has been greatly pitied by Dryasdust and others. Gurth, with the brass collar round his neck, tending Cedric's pigs in the glades of the wood, is not what I call an exemplar of human felicity: but Gurth, with the sky above him, with the free air and tinted boscage and umbrage round him, and in him at least the certainty of supper and social lodging when he came home; Gurth to me seems happy, in comparison with many a Lancashire and Buckinghamshire man of these days, not born thrall of anybody! Gurth's brass collar did not gall him: Cedric *deserved* to be his master. The pigs were Cedric's, but Gurth too would get his parings of them. Gurth had the inexpressible satisfaction of feeling himself related indissolubly, though in a rude brass-collar way, to his fellow-mortals in this Earth. He had superiors, inferiors, equals.—Gurth is now "emancipated" long since; has what we call "Liberty." Liberty, I am told, is a divine thing. Liberty when it becomes the "Liberty to die by starvation" is not so divine!

Liberty? The true liberty of a man, you would say, consisted in his finding out, or being forced to find out the right path, and to walk thereon To learn, or to be taught, what work he actually was able for; and then by permission, persuasion, and even compulsion, to set about doing of the same! That is his true blessedness, honour,

'liberty" and maximum of wellbeing: if liberty be not that, I for one have small care about liberty. You do not allow a palpable madman to leap over precipices; you violate his liberty, you that are wise; and keep him, were it in strait-waistcoats, away from the precipices! Every stupid, every cowardly and foolish man is but a less palpable madman: his true liberty were that a wiser man, that any and every wiser man, could, by brass collars, or in whatever milder or sharper way, lay hold of him when he was going wrong, and order and compel him to go a little righter. O, if thou really art my *Senior*, Seigneur, my *Elder*, Presbyter or Priest,—if thou art in very deed my *Wiser*, may a beneficent instinct lead and impel thee to "conquer" me, to command me! If thou do know better than I what is good and right, I conjure thee in the name of God, force me to do it; were it by never such brass collars, whips and handcuffs, leave me not to walk over precipices! That I have been called, by all the Newspapers, a "free man" will avail me little, if my pilgrimage have ended in death and wreck. O that the Newspapers had called me slave, coward, fool, or what it pleased their sweet voices to name me, and I had attained not death, but life!—Liberty requires new definitions.

A conscious abhorrence and intolerance of Folly, of Baseness, Stupidity, Poltroonery and all that brood of things, dwells deep in some men: still deeper in others an *un*conscious abhorrence and intolerance, clothed moreover by the beneficent Supreme Powers in what stout appetites, energies, egoisms so-called, are suitable to it;—these latter are your Conquerors, Romans, Normans, Russians, Indo-English; Founders of what we call Aristocracies. Which indeed have they not the most "divine right" to found;—being themselves very truly Ἄριστοι, BRAVEST, BEST; and conquering generally a confused rabble of WORST, or at lowest, clearly enough, of WORSE? I think their divine right, tried, with affirmatory verdict, in the greatest Law-Court known to me, was good! A class of men who are dreadfully exclaimed against by Dryasdust; of whom nevertheless beneficent Nature has oftentimes had need; and may, alas, again have need.

When, across the hundredfold poor scepticisms, trivialisms and constitutional cobwebberies of Dryasdust, you catch any glimpse of a William the Conqueror, a Tancred of Hauteville or suchlike,—do you not discern veritably

some rude outline of a true God-made King ; whom not the Champion of England cased in tin, but all Nature and the Universe were calling to the throne ? It is absolutely necessary that he get thither. Nature does not mean her poor Saxon children to perish, of obesity, stupor or other malady, as yet : a stern Ruler and Line of Rulers therefore is called in,—a stern but most beneficent *perpetual House-Surgeon* is by Nature herself called in, and even the appropriate *fees* are provided for him ! Dryasdust talks lamentably about Hereward and the Fen Counties ; fate of Earl Waltheof ; Yorkshire and the North reduced to ashes : all which is undoubtedly lamentable. But even Dryasdust apprises me of one fact : " A child, in this William's reign, might have carried a purse of gold from end to end of England." My erudite friend, it is a fact which outweighs a thousand ! Sweep away thy constitutional, sentimental and other cobwebberies ; look eye to eye, if thou still have any eye, in the face of this big burly William Bastard : thou wilt see a fellow of most flashing discernment, of most strong lion-heart ;—in whom, as it were, within a frame of oak and iron, the gods have planted the soul of " a man of genius " ! Dost thou call that nothing ? I call it an immense thing !—Rage enough was in this Willelmus Conquæstor, rage enough for his occasions ;—and yet the essential element of him, as of all such men, is not scorching *fire*, but shining illuminative *light*. Fire and light are strangely interchangeable ; nay, at bottom, I have found them different forms of the same most godlike " elementary substance " in our world : a thing worth stating in these days. The essential element of this Conquæstor is, first of all, the most sun-eyed perception of what *is* really what on this God's-Earth ;—which, thou wilt find, does mean at bottom " Justice," and " Virtues " not a few : *Conformity* to what the Maker has seen good to make ; that, I suppose, will mean Justice and a Virtue or two ?—

Dost thou think Willelmus Conquæstor would have tolerated ten years' jargon, one hour's jargon, on the propriety of killing Cotton-manufacturers by partridge Corn-Laws ? I fancy, this was not the man to knock out of his night's rest with nothing but a noisy bedlamism in your mouth ! " Assist us still better to bush the partridges ; strangle Plugson who spins the shirts ? "—" *Par la Splendeur de Dieu !* "——Dost thou think Willelmus Conquæstor, in this new time, with Steamengine Captains of Industry on

one hand of him, and Joe-Manton Captains of Idleness on the other, would have doubted which *was* really the BEST; which did deserve strangling, and which not?

I have a certain indestructible regard for Willelmus Conquæstor. A resident House-Surgeon, provided by Nature for her beloved English People, and even furnished with the requisite fees, as I said; for he by no means felt himself doing Nature's work, this Willelmus, but his own work exclusively! And his own work withal it was; informed "*par la Splendeur de Dieu.*"—I say, it is necessary to get the work out of such a man, however harsh that be! When a world, not yet doomed for death, is rushing down to ever-deeper Baseness and Confusion, it is a dire necessity of Nature's to bring in her ARISTOCRACIES, her BEST, even by forcible methods. When their descendants or representatives cease entirely to *be* the Best, Nature's poor world will very soon rush down again to Baseness; and it becomes a dire necessity of Nature's to cast them out. Hence French Revolutions, Five-point Charters, Democracies, and a mournful list of *Etceteras*, in these our afflicted times.

To what extent Democracy has now reached, how it advances irresistible with ominous, ever-increasing speed, he that will open his eyes on any province of human affairs may discern. Democracy is everywhere the inexorable demand of these ages, swiftly fulfilling itself. From the thunder of Napoleon battles, to the jabbering of Open-vestry in St. Mary Axe, all things announce Democracy. A distinguished man, whom some of my readers will hear again with pleasure, thus writes to me what in these days he notes from the Wahngasse of Weissnichtwo, where our London fashions seem to be in full vogue. Let us hear the Herr Teufelsdröckh again, were it but the smallest word!

"Democracy, which means despair of finding any Heroes to govern you, and contented putting-up with the want of them,—alas, thou too, *mein Lieber*, seest well how close it is of kin to *Atheism*, and other sad *Isms*: he who discovers no God whatever, how shall he discover Heroes, the visible Temples of God?—Strange enough meanwhile it is, to observe with what thoughtlessness, here in our rigidly Conservative Country, men rush into Democracy with full cry. Beyond doubt, his Excellenz the Titular-Herr Ritter Kauderwälsch von Pferdefuss-Quacksalber, he our distinguished Conservative Premier himself, and all but the thicker-headed of his Party, discern Democracy to be in-

evitable as death, and are even desperate of delaying it much!

"You cannot walk the streets without beholding Democracy announce itself: the very Tailor has become, if not properly Sansculottic, which to him would be ruinous, yet a Tailor unconsciously symbolising, and prophesying with his scissors, the reign of Equality. What now is our fashionable coat? A thing of superfinest texture, of deeply meditated cut; with Malines-lace cuffs; quilted with gold; so that a man can carry, without difficulty, an estate of land on his back? *Keineswegs*, By no manner of means! The Sumptuary Laws have fallen into such a state of desuetude as was never before seen. Our fashionable coat is an amphibium between barnsack and drayman's doublet. The cloth of it is studiously coarse; the colour a speckled soot-black or rust-brown gray; the nearest approach to a Peasant's. And for shape,—thou shouldst see it! The last consummation of the year now passing over us is definable as Three Bags; a big bag for the body, two small bags for the arms, and by way of collar a hem! The first Antique Cheruscan who, of felt-cloth or bear's-hide, with bone or metal needle, set about making himself a coat, before Tailors had yet awakened out of Nothing,—did not he make it even so? A loose wide poke for body, with two holes to let out the arms; this was his original coat: to which holes it was soon visible that two small loose pokes, or sleeves, easily appended, would be an improvement.

"Thus has the Tailor-art, so to speak, overset itself, like most other things; changed its centre-of-gravity; whirled suddenly over from zenith to nadir. Your Stulz, with huge somerset, vaults from his high shop-board down to the depths of primal savagery,—carrying much along with him! For I will invite thee to reflect that the Tailor, as topmost ultimate froth of Human Society, is indeed swift-passing, evanescent, slippery to decipher; yet significant of much, nay of all. Topmost evanescent froth, he is churned-up from the very lees, and from all intermediate regions of the liquor. The general outcome he, visible to the eye, of what men aimed to do, and were obliged and enabled to do, in this one public department of symbolising themselves to each other by covering of their skins. A smack of all Human Life lies in the Tailor: its wild struggles toward beauty, dignity, freedom, victory; and how, hemmed-in by Sedan and Huddersfield, by Nescience,

Dulness, Prurience, and other sad necessities and laws of Nature, it has attained just to this: Gray savagery of Three Sacks with a hem!

"When the very Tailor verges toward Sansculottism, is it not ominous? The last Divinity of poor mankind dethroning himself sinking *his* taper too, flame downmost, like the Genius of Sleep or of Death; admonitory that Tailor time shall be no more!—For, little as one could advise Sumptuary Laws at the present epoch, yet nothing is clearer than that where ranks do actually exist, strict division of costumes will also be enforced; that if we ever have a new Hierarchy and Aristocracy, acknowledged veritably as such, for which I daily pray Heaven, the Tailor will reawaken; and be, by volunteering and appointment, consciously and unconsciously, a safeguard of that same."—Certain farther observations, from the same invaluable pen, on our never-ending changes of mode, our "perpetual nomadic and even ape-like appetite for change and mere change" in all the equipments of our existence, and the "fatal revolutionary character" thereby manifested, we suppress for the present. It may be admitted that Democracy, in all meanings of the word, is in full career; irresistible by any Ritter Kauderwälsch or other Son of Adam, as times go. "Liberty" is a thing men are determined to have.

But truly, as I had to remark in the mean while, "the liberty of not being oppressed by your fellow man" is an indispensable, yet one of the most significant fractional parts of Human Liberty. No man oppresses thee, can bid thee fetch or carry, come or go, without reason shown. True; from all men thou art emancipated: but from Thyself and from the Devil—? No man, wiser, unwiser, can make thee come or go: but thy own futilities, bewilderments, thy false appetites for Money, Windsor Georges and suchlike? No man oppresses thee, O free and independent Franchiser: but does not this stupid Porter-pot oppress thee? No Son of Adam can bid thee come or go; but this absurd Pot of Heavy-wet, this can and does! Thou art the thrall not of Cedric the Saxon, but of thy own brutal appetites and this scoured dish of liquor. And thou pratest of thy "liberty"? Thou entire blockhead!

Heavy-wet and gin: alas, these are not the only kinds of thraldom. Thou who walkest in a vain show, looking

out with ornamental dilettante sniff and serene supremacy at all Life and all Death; and amblest jauntily; perking up thy poor talk into crotchets, thy poor conduct into fatuous somnambulisms;—and *art* as an "enchanted Ape" under God's sky, where thou mightest have been a man, had proper Schoolmasters and Conquerors, and Constables with cat-o'-nine tails, been vouchsafed thee; dost thou call that "liberty"? Or your unreposing Mammon-worshipper again, driven, as if by Galvanisms, by Devils and Fixed-Ideas, who rises early and sits late, chasing the impossible; straining every faculty to "fill himself with the east wind,"—how merciful were it, could you, by mild persuasion, or by the severest tyranny so-called, check him in his mad path, and turn him into a wiser one! All painful tyranny, in that case again, were but mild "surgery"; the pain of it cheap, as health and life, instead of galvanism and fixed-idea, are cheap at any price.

Sure enough, of all paths a man could strike into, there *is*, at any given moment, a *best path* for every man; a thing which, here and now, it were of all things *wisest* for him to do;—which could he be but led or driven to do, he were then doing "like a man," as we phrase it; all men and gods agreeing with him, the whole Universe virtually exclaiming Well-done to him! His success, in such case, were complete; his felicity a maximum. This path, to find this path and walk in it, is the one thing needful for him. Whatsoever forwards him in that, let it come to him even in the shape of blows and spurnings, is liberty: whatsoever hinders him, were it ward-motes, open-vestries, pollbooths, tremendous cheers, rivers of heavy-wet, is slavery.

The notion that a man's liberty consists in giving his vote at election-hustings, and saying, "Behold, now I too have my twenty-thousandth part of a Talker in our National Palaver; will not all the gods be good to me?"—is one of the pleasantest! Nature nevertheless is kind at present; and puts it into the heads of many, almost of all. The liberty especially which has to purchase itself by social isolation, and each man standing separate from the other, having "no business with him" but a cash-account: this is such a liberty as the Earth seldom saw;—as the Earth will not long put up with, recommend it how you may. This liberty turns out, before it have long continued in action, with all men flinging up their caps round it, to be, for the Working Millions a liberty to die by want of food;

for the Idle Thousands and Units, alas, a still more fatal liberty to live in want of work; to have no earnest duty to do in this God's-World any more. What becomes of a man in such predicament? Earth's Laws are silent; and Heaven's speak in a voice which is not heard. No work, and the ineradicable need of work, give rise to new very wondrous life-philosophies, new very wondrous life-practices! Dilettantism, Pococurantism, Beau-Brummelism, with perhaps an occasional, half-mad, protesting burst of Byronism, establish themselves: at the end of a certain period,—if you go back to "the Dead Sea," there is, say our Moslem friends, a very strange "Sabbath-day" transacting itself there!—Brethren, we know but imperfectly yet, after ages of Constitutional Government, what Liberty and Slavery are.

Democracy, the chase of Liberty in that direction, shall go its full course; unrestrainable by him of Pferdefuss-Quacksalber, or any of *his* household. The Toiling Millions of Mankind, in most vital need and passionate instinctive desire of Guidance, shall cast away False-Guidance; and hope, for an hour, that No-Guidance will suffice them: but it can be for an hour only. The smallest item of human Slavery is the oppression of man by his Mock-Superiors; the palpablest, but I say at bottom the smallest. Let him shake-off such oppression, trample it indignantly under his feet; I blame him not, I pity and commend him. But oppression by your Mock-Superiors well shaken off, the grand problem yet remains to solve: That of finding government by your Real-Superiors! Alas, how shall we ever learn the solution of that, benighted, bewildered, sniffing, sneering, godforgetting unfortunates as we are? It is a work for centuries; to be taught us by tribulations, confusions, insurrections, obstructions; who knows if not by conflagration and despair! It is a lesson inclusive of all other lessons; the hardest of all lessons to learn.

One thing I do know: Those Apes, chattering on the branches by the Dead Sea, never got it learned; but chatter there to this day. To them no Moses need come a second time; a thousand Moseses would be but so many painted Phantasms, interesting Fellow-Apes of new strange aspect,—whom they would "invite to dinner," be glad to meet with in lion-soirées. To them the voice of Prophecy, of heavenly monition, is quite ended. They chatter there, all Heaven shut to them, to the end of the world. The

unfortunates! Oh, what is dying of hunger, with honest tools in your hand, with a manful purpose in your heart, and much real labour lying round you done, in comparison? You honestly quit your tools; quit a most muddy confused coil of sore work, short rations, of sorrows, dispiritments and contradictions, having now honestly done with it all;—and await, not entirely in a distracted manner, what the Supreme Powers, and the Silences and the Eternities may have to say to you.

A second thing I know: This lesson will have to be learned,—under penalties! England will either learn it, or England also will cease to exist among Nations. England will either learn to reverence its Heroes, and discriminate them from its Sham-Heroes and Valets and gaslighted Histrios; and to prize them as the audible God's-voice, amid all inane jargons and temporary market-cries, and say to them with heart-loyalty, "Be ye King and Priest, and Gospel and Guidance for us": or else England will continue to worship new and ever-new forms of Quackhood,—and so, with what resiliences and reboundings matters little, go down to the Father of Quacks! Can I dread such things of England? Wretched, thick-eyed, gross-hearted mortals, why will ye worship lies, and "Stuffed Clothes-suits created by the ninth-parts of men"! It is not your purses that suffer; your farm-rents, your commerces, your mill-revenues, loud as ye lament over these; no, it is not these alone, but a far deeper than these: it is your souls that lie dead, crushed down under despicable Nightmares, Atheisms, Brain-fumes; and are not souls at all, but mere succedanea for *salt* to keep your bodies and their appetites from putrefying! Your cotton-spinning and thrice-miraculous mechanism, what is this too, by itself, but a larger kind of Animalism? Spiders can spin, Beavers can build and show contrivance; the Ant lays-up accumulation of capital, and has, for aught I know, a Bank of Antland. If there is no soul in man higher than all that, did it reach to sailing on the cloud-rack, and spinning sea-sand; then I say, man is but an animal, a more cunning kind of brute: he has no soul, but only a succedaneum for salt. Whereupon, seeing himself to be truly of the beasts that perish, he ought to admit it, I think;—and also straightway universally to kill himself; and so, in a manlike manner at least *end*, and wave these brute-worlds *his* dignified farewell!—

BOOK IV

HOROSCOPE

CHAPTER IV

CAPTAINS OF INDUSTRY

If I believed that Mammonism with its adjuncts was to continue henceforth the one serious principle of our existence, I should reckon it idle to solicit remedial measures from any Government, the disease being insusceptible of remedy. Government can do much, but it can in nowise do all. Government, as the most conspicuous object in Society, is called upon to give signal of what shall be done; and, in many ways, to preside over, further, and command the doing of it. But the Government cannot do, by all its signaling and commanding, what the Society is radically indisposed to do. In the long-run every Government is the exact symbol of its People, with their wisdom and unwisdom; we have to say, Like People like Government.—The main substance of this immense Problem of Organising Labour, and first of all of Managing the Working Classes, will, it is very clear, have to be solved by those who stand practically in the middle of it — by those who themselves work and preside over work. Of all that can be enacted by any Parliament in regard to it, the germs must already lie potentially extant in those two Classes, who are to obey such enactment. A Human Chaos *in* which there is no light, you vainly attempt to irradiate by light shed *on* it: order never can arise there.

But it is my firm conviction that the "Hell of England" will *cease* to be that of "not making money"; that we shall get a nobler Hell and a nobler Heaven! I anticipate light *in* the Human Chaos, glimmering, shining more and more; under manifold true signals from without That

light shall shine. Our deity no longer being Mammon,—O Heavens, each man will then say to himself : " Why such deadly haste to make money ? I shall not go to Hell, even if I do not make money ! There is another Hell, I am told ! " Competition, at railway-speed, in all branches of commerce and work will then abate :—good felt-hats for the head, in every sense, instead of seven-feet lath-and-plaster hats on wheels, will then be discoverable ! Bubble-periods, with their panics and commercial crises, will again become infrequent ; steady modest industry will take the place of gambling speculation. To be a noble Master, among noble Workers, will again be the first ambition with some few ; to be a rich Master only the second. How the Inventive Genius of England, with the whirr of its bobbins and billy-rollers shoved somewhat into the backgrounds of the brain, will contrive and devise, not cheaper produce exclusively, but fairer distribution of the produce at its present cheapness ! By degrees, we shall again have a Society with something of Heroism in it, something of Heaven's Blessing on it ; we shall again have, as my German friend asserts, " instead of Mammon-Feudalism with unsold cotton-shirts and Preservation of the Game, noble just Industrialism and Government by the Wisest ! "

It is with the hope of awakening here and there a British man to know himself for a man and divine soul, that a few words of parting admonition, to all persons to whom the Heavenly Powers have lent power of any kind in this land, may now be addressed. And first to those same Master-Workers, Leaders of Industry ; who stand nearest and in fact powerfulest, though not most prominent, being as yet in too many senses a Virtuality rather than an Actuality.

The Leaders of Industry, if Industry is ever to be led, are virtually the Captains of the World ! if there be no nobleness in them, there will never be an Aristocracy more. But let the Captains of Industry consider : once again, are they born of other clay than the old Captains of Slaughter ; doomed forever to be no Chivalry, but a mere gold-plated *Doggery*,—what the French well name *Canaille*, " Doggery " with more or less gold carrion at its disposal ? Captains of Industry are the true Fighters, henceforth recognisable as the only true ones : Fighters against Chaos, Necessity and the Devils and Jötuns ; and lead on Mankind in that great, and alone true, and universal warfare ; the stars in their

courses fighting for them, and all Heaven and all Earth saying audibly, Well done! Let the Captains of Industry retire into their own hearts, and ask solemnly, If there is nothing but vulturous hunger, for fine wines, valet reputation and gilt carriages, discoverable there? Of hearts made by the Almighty God I will not believe such a thing. Deep-hidden under wretchedest godforgetting Cants, Epicurisms, Dead-Sea Apisms; forgotten as under foulest fat Lethe mud and weeds, there is yet, in all hearts born into this God's-World, a spark of the Godlike slumbering. Awake, O nightmare sleepers; awake, arise, or be forever fallen! This is not playhouse poetry; it is sober fact. Our England, our world cannot live as it is. It will connect itself with a God again, or go down with nameless throes and fire-consummation to the Devils. Thou who feelest aught of such a Godlike stirring in thee, any faintest intimation of it as through heavy-laden dreams, follow *it*, I conjure thee. Arise, save thyself, be one of those that save thy country.

Bucaniers, Chactaw Indians, whose supreme aim in fighting is that they may get the scalps, the money, that they may amass scalps and money: out of such came no Chivalry, and never will! Out of such came only gore and wreck, infernal rage and misery; desperation quenched in annihilation. Behold it, I bid thee, behold there, and consider! What is it that thou have a hundred thousand-pound bills laid-up in thy strong-room, a hundred scalps hung-up in thy wigwam? I value not them or thee. Thy scalps and thy thousand-pound bills are as yet nothing, if no nobleness from within irradiate them; if no Chivalry, in action, or in embryo ever struggling toward birth and action, be there.

Love of men cannot be bought by cash-payment; and without love men cannot endure to be together. You cannot lead a Fighting World without having it regimented, chivalried; the thing, in a day, becomes impossible; all men in it, the highest at first, the very lowest at last, discern consciously, or by a noble instinct, this necessity. And can you any more continue to lead a Working World unregimented, anarchic? I answer, and the Heavens and Earth are now answering, No! The thing becomes not "in a day" impossible; but in some two generations it does. Yes, when fathers and mothers, in Stockport hunger-cellars, begin to eat their children, and Irish widows have to prove

their relationship by dying of typhus-fever; and amid Governing "Corporations of the Best and Bravest," busy to preserve their game by "bushing," dark millions of God's human creatures start up in mad Chartisms, impracticable Sacred-Months, and Manchester Insurrections;—and there is a virtual Industrial Aristocracy as yet only half-alive, spell-bound amid money-bags and ledgers; and an actual Idle Aristocracy seemingly near dead in somnolent delusions, in trespasses and double-barrels; "sliding," as on inclined-planes, which every new year they *soap* with new Hansard's-jargon under God's sky, and so are "sliding," ever faster, toward a "scale" and balance-scale whereon is written *Thou art found Wanting*:—in such days, after a generation or two, I say, it does become, even to the low and simple, very palpably impossible! No Working World, any more than a Fighting World, can be led on without a noble Chivalry of Work, and laws and fixed rules which follow out of that,—far nobler than any Chivalry of Fighting was. As an anarchic multitude on mere Supply-and-demand, it is becoming inevitable that we dwindle in horrid suicidal convulsion and self-abrasion, frightful to the imagination, into *Chactaw* Workers. With wigwams and scalps,—with palaces and thousand-pound bills; with savagery, depopulation, chaotic desolation! Good Heavens, will not one French Revolution and Reign of Terror suffice us, but must there be two? There will be two if needed; there will be twenty if needed; there will be precisely as many as are needed. The Laws of Nature will have themselves fulfilled. That is a thing certain to me.

Your gallant battle-hosts and work-hosts, as the others did, will need to be made loyally yours; they must and will be regulated, methodically secured in their just share of conquest under you;—joined with you in veritable brotherhood, sonhood, by quite other and deeper ties than those of temporary day's wages! How would mere red-coated regiments, to say nothing of chivalries, fight for you, if you could discharge them on the evening of the battle, on payment of the stipulated shillings,—and they discharge you on the morning of it! Chelsea Hospitals, pensions, promotions, rigorous lasting covenant on the one side and on the other, are indispensable even for a hired fighter. The Feudal Baron, much more,—how could he subsist with mere temporary mercenaries round him, at sixpence a day; ready to go over to the other side, if sevenpence were

offered? He could not have subsisted;—and his noble instinct saved him from the necessity of even trying! The Feudal Baron had a Man's Soul in him; to which anarchy, mutiny, and the other fruits of temporary mercenaries, were intolerable: he had never been a Baron otherwise, but had continued a Chactaw and Bucanier. He felt it precious, and at last it became habitual, and his fruitful enlarged existence included it as a necessity, to have men round him who in heart loved him; whose life he watched over with rigour yet with love; who were prepared to give their life for him, if need came. It was beautiful; it was human! Man lives not otherwise, nor can live contented, anywhere or anywhen. Isolation is the sum-total of wretchedness to man. To be cut off, to be left solitary: to have a world alien, not your world; all a hostile camp for you; not a home at all, of hearts and faces who are yours, whose you are! It is the frightfulest enchantment; too truly a work of the Evil One. To have neither superior, nor inferior, nor equal, united manlike to you. Without father, without child, without brother. Man knows no sadder destiny. "How is each of us," exclaims Jean Paul, "so lonely in the wide bosom of the All!" Encased each as in his transparent "ice-palace"; our brother visible in his, making signals and gesticulations to us;—visible, but forever unattainable: on his bosom we shall never rest, nor he on ours. It was not a God that did this; no!

Awake, ye noble Workers, warriors in the one true war: all this must be remedied. It is you who are already half-alive, whom I will welcome into life; whom I will conjure, in God's name, to shake off your enchanted sleep, and live wholly! Cease to count scalps, gold-purses; not in these lies your or our salvation. Even these, if you count only these, will not long be left. Let bucaniering be put far from you; alter, speedily abrogate all laws of the bucaniers, if you would gain any victory that shall endure. Let God's justice, let pity, nobleness and manly valour, with more gold-purses or with fewer, testify themselves in this your brief Life-transit to all the Eternities, the Gods and Silences. It is to you I call; for ye are not dead, ye are already half-alive: there is in you a sleepless dauntless energy, the prime-matter of all nobleness in man. Honour to you in your kind. It is to you I call: ye know at least this, That the mandate of God to His creature man is: Work! The future Epic

of the World rests not with those that are near dead, but with those that are alive, and those that are coming into life.

Look around you. Your world-hosts are all in mutiny, in confusion, destitution; on the eve of fiery wreck and madness! They will not march farther for you, on the sixpence a day and supply-and-demand principle: they will not; nor ought they, nor can they. Ye shall reduce them to order, begin reducing them. To order, to just subordination; noble loyalty in return for noble guidance. Their souls are driven nigh mad; let yours be sane and ever saner. Not as a bewildered bewildering mob; but as a firm regimented mass, with real captains over them, will these men march any more. All human interests, combined human endeavours, and social growths in this world, have, at a certain stage of their development, required organising: and Work, the grandest of human interests, does now require it.

God knows, the task will be hard: but no noble task was ever easy. This task will wear away your lives, and the lives of your sons and grandsons: but for what purpose, if not for tasks like this, were lives given to men? Ye shall cease to count your thousand-pound scalps, the noble of you shall cease! Nay the very scalps, as I say, will not long be left if you count only these. Ye shall cease wholly to be barbarous vulturous Chactaws, and become noble European Nineteenth-Century Men. Ye shall know that Mammon, in never such gigs and flunky "respectabilities," is not the alone God; that of himself he is but a Devil, and even a Brute-god.

Difficult? Yes, it will be difficult. The short-fibre cotton; that too was difficult. The waste cotton-shrub, long useless, disobedient, as the thistle by the wayside,—have ye not conquered it: made it into beautiful bandana webs; white woven shirts for men; bright-tinted air-garments wherein flit goddesses? Ye have shivered mountains asunder, made the hard iron pliant to you as soft putty: the Forest-giants, Marsh-jötuns bear sheaves of golden-grain; Ægir the Sea-demon himself stretches his back for a sleek highway to you, and on Firehorses and Windhorses ye career. Ye are most strong. Thor red-bearded, with his blue sun-eyes, with his cheery heart and strong thunder-hammer, he and you have prevailed. Ye are most strong, ye Sons of the icy North, of the far East,—

far marching from your rugged Eastern Wildernesses hitherward from the gray Dawn of Time! Ye are Sons of the *Jötun*-land; the land of Difficulties Conquered. Difficult? You must try this thing. Once try it with the understanding that it will and shall have to be done. Try it as ye try the paltrier thing, making of money! I will bet on you once more, against all Jötuns, Tailor-gods, Double-barrelled Law-wards, and Denizens of Chaos whatsoever!

NOTES

BURNS

This essay was published in the *Edinburgh Review*, the editor of which, Francis Jeffrey, wrote to its author: "There is also much palpable exaggeration. . . . But there is a noble strain of sentiment and kind and lofty feeling, and much beauty and felicity of diction." Carlyle's sympathy with Burns was profound, and Burns's influence upon Carlyle has perhaps not been adequately recognized. An interesting brief discussion of the relations of the two men may be found in Chapter XX of Wilson's *Carlyle to "The French Revolution."* The occasion for the writing of the essay was the appearance of Lockhart's *Life of Robert Burns.*

Page 9. *Butler:* Samuel Butler (1612-1680), author of the master-piece of mock heroic, *Hudibras.* According to Dryden, he was "starved" by his age.

Mr. Lockhart: John G. Lockhart (1794-1854) was the son-in-law of Walter Scott and a distinguished man of letters.

Page 10. *Sir Thomas Lucy:* He has been credited with driving Shakespeare to London by prosecuting him for poaching.

John a Combe: A resident of Stratford; in his will he left Shakespeare five pounds.

Dr. Currie: James Currie (1756-1805) published in 1800 *The Works of Robert Burns with an Account of his Life, and a Criticism of his Writings.*

Mr. Walker: Josiah Walker's *An Account of the Life and Character of Robert Burns* appeared in 1811.

Page 11. *Morris Birkbeck:* The author of a book concerning his travels in the United States, published in 1818.

Page 13. *Ferguson or Ramsay:* Robert Ferguson (1750-1774) and *Allan Ramsay* (1686-1758) were Scottish poets who prepared the way for Burns.

Page 14. *Sir Hudson Lowe:* Governor of St. Helena when Napoleon was prisoner there.

Page 17. *Horace:* Latin poet (65 B.C.-8 B.C.), author of *Ars Poetica,* from which Carlyle quotes; the complete quotation is: "If you wish me to weep, you must first grieve yourself."

Page 18. *Harolds and Giaours: Childe Harold* and *The Giaour* are two of Byron's more famous poems. The heroes in both are "Byronic" and artificial. *Don Juan,* written toward the end of Byron's life, is generally recognized today as Byron's most *sincere* work.

Page 19. *Mrs. Dunlop:* One of Burns's friends and correspondents.

Page 20. *"Iron-mailed Epics":* Carlyle probably refers chiefly to Robert Southey's longer poems.

Page 21. *Delphi:* The home of the oracle of Apollo, the god of poetry.

Minerva Press: A London publishing house that was famous for its sentimental novels.

Borgia: The Borgia family of Italy in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries was famous for its crimes.

Luther: Martin Luther (1483-1546) is credited with starting the Protestant Reformation. He was greatly admired by Carlyle.

Mossgiel and Tarbolton: Places where Burns lived.

Crockford's: A club-house in London famous for gambling.

Tuileries: A royal palace in Paris.

Page 22. *Theocritus:* A Greek poet of the third century B.C. who wrote "idyls," or poems describing country life.

Council of Trent: A famous council of the Catholic Church (1545-1563) which condemned Protestant doctrine and settled matters of discipline.

Page 23. *Retzsch:* A German painter and etcher (1779-1857), who illustrated the works of Goethe and other German writers.

Page 24. *Poussin:* Nicolas Poussin (1594-1665), French painter.

Richardson and Defoe: The authors of *Clarissa Harlowe* and *Robinson Crusoe* respectively.

Page 25. *"Red-wat-shod":* Literally, "red-wet-shod,"

from wading through blood. The expression appears in "To William Simpson."

Professor Stewart: Dugald Stewart (1753-1828), Professor of philosophy at Edinburgh when Carlyle was a student there, and a well-known philosophical writer.

Page 26. *Novum Organum:* A famous philosophical work by Francis Bacon, published in 1620. The Latin title means: "A New Method."

Page 28. *Dr. Slop and my uncle Toby:* Characters in Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* (1760-1767), a humorous novel of which Carlyle was very fond.

Page 29. *Æschylus:* Usually regarded as the greatest of the Greek writers of tragedies. He lived 525-456 B.C.

The Furies were avenging deities.

Cacus: A son of Vulcan, the Roman god of fire. He stole cattle from Hercules, while that hero was sleeping.

Thebes, and in Pelops' line: Suggested by a line in Milton's *Il Penseroso.* Both the members of the royal house of Thebes and the descendants of Pelops were pursued by curses which Carlyle calls "material Fate." The stories are among the most important in Greek mythology.

Page 30. *Sterne:* Author of *Tristram Shandy,* two of the characters of which have already been mentioned.

Page 31. *Tieck:* Ludwig Tieck (1773-1853), a poet associated with the German romantic movement, from whom Carlyle translated in his *German Romance.*

Musäus: Johann Karl August Musäus (1735-1787) was the author of folk-tales, some of which Carlyle translated. His tales have been criticized for their artificiality.

Page 32. *Teniers:* Presumably David Teniers, the younger (1610-1690), a Flemish painter.

Beggars' Opera: An opera written by John Gay (1685-1732).

Beggars' Bush: A popular comedy first performed in 1622, supposed to have been written by Fletcher and Massinger and perhaps Beaumont in collaboration.

Ossorius the Portugal Bishop: Jeronymo Osorio (1506-1580), a Portuguese writer famous for his Latin prose.

Page 33. *Fletcher:* Andrew Fletcher (1655-1716), a Scottish political writer. The correct quotation is: "I knew a very wise man so much of Sir Christopher's senti-

ment, that he believed if a man were permitted to make all the ballads, he need not care who should make the laws of a nation."

Page 34. *Grays and Glovers:* Thomas Gray (1716-1771), author of *Elegy in a Country Churchyard,* and Richard Glover (1712-1785), a poet whose work is pretty much forgotten.

Goldsmith: Oliver Goldsmith (1728-1774), friend of Dr. Johnson, and author of *The Deserted Village.*

Johnson: The great Dr. Johnson (1709-1784). The *Rambler* was a periodical of the same style as the *Spectator. Rasselas* was a romance written with a moral purpose.

John Boston: The author of *Human Nature in its Fourfold State* was Thomas Boston (1676-1732), a Scotch clergyman.

Page 35. *Jacobite blood:* The reference is to the Scotch adherents to the cause of the Stuarts.

Lord Kames: Henry Home, Lord Kames (1696-1782), author of *Elements of Criticism,* was a distinguished Scotch writer.

Hume, Robertson, Smith: David Hume (1711-1776) was a sceptical philosopher and the author of a history of England. William Robertson (1721-1793) was another Scotch historian. Adam Smith (1723-1790), Scotch economist, was the author of *The Wealth of Nations,* one of the most influential works of its class ever written.

Racine and Voltaire, Batteux and Boileau: All of these were French writers. Racine (1639-1699) was the author of tragedies in the classical tradition. Voltaire (1694-1778), writer of plays, poems, histories, fiction, criticism, and philosophical works, was the subject of one of Carlyle's early essays. Batteux (1713-1780) wrote on aesthetics. Boileau (1636-1711) was the author of *Art Poétique,* which was an influential statement of classical literary theory.

Montesquieu and Mably: Montesquieu (1689-1755) wrote *L'Esprit des Lois* (The Spirit of Laws); Mably (1709-1785) also wrote upon historical and political subjects.

Quesnay: François Quesnay (1694-1774), writer on political economy.

La Flèche: Hume lived at this French town for some time.

Page 40. *in glory and in joy,* etc.: Wordsworth's description of Burns in *Resolution and Independence.*

Page 41. *New-Light Priesthood:* The liberal clergy, who opposed the strict Calvinism which had characterized the Scottish church.

Page 42. *Rienzi:* An Italian popular leader of the fourteenth century.

Page 43. *Mr. Walker:* William Walker, author of one of the lives of Burns.

Virgilium vidi tantum: I have seen the great Virgil.

Professor Ferguson: Adam Ferguson (1723-1816) was a Scottish writer and professor in Edinburgh University.

Page 44. *a print of Bunbury's:* Henry William Bunbury (1750-1811) was famous for his caricatures.

Langhorne: John Langhorne (1735-1779), a minor poet.

Mr. Nasmyth's picture: Alexander Nasmyth (1758-1840) was a Scottish portrait-painter.

Page 45. *in malam partem:* Disparagingly.

Page 46. *Blacklock:* Thomas Blacklock (1721-1791) was a blind Scottish poet.

Page 49. *convival Mæcenases:* Mæcenas was the patron of Virgil and Horace. The name is often used figuratively to refer to a literary patron.

Dumfries Aristocracy: Burns lived at Dumfries from 1791 until his death in 1796. The social leaders of Dumfries are said to have avoided association with him.

Page 50. *Lady Grizzel Baillie:* A Scottish poet (1665-1746).

Page 53. *Cervantes:* Author of *Don Quixote.* He lived during the reigns of Philip II and Philip III of Spain. Carlyle presumably refers to the former.

Page 54. *Homer:* Greek epic poet, supposed to be the author of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey.* There is no authentic account of his life.

Socrates: Famous Greek philosopher (c. 469-399 B.C.), who was condemned to death for "corrupting the youth of Athens."

Roger Bacon: English scientist and philosopher (c. 1214-1294), whose writings were condemned by the Church.

Galileo: Italian astronomer (1564-1642), who made important scientific discoveries but whose teachings were condemned by the Pope.

Tasso: Torquato Tasso (1544-1595), Italian poet, who was confined for a time in an insane asylum.

Camoëns: Portuguese poet (c. 1524-1580), neglected during his life.

Page 55. *Restaurateur:* Keeper of restaurant or eating-house.

Page 56. *Locke:* John Locke (1632-1704), whose *Essay on the Human Understanding* was one of the most influential works of philosophy in modern times.

Araucana: A Spanish epic by Alonso de Ercilla y Zuñiga (1533-1595?).

Page 57. *Rabelais:* François Rabelais (1495-1553), famous French humorist.

Page 58. *Jean Paul:* Jean Paul Friedrich Richter (1763-1825), one of Carlyle's German masters.

Page 60. *Plebiscita:* A vote or decision by the Roman plebeians; here applied to the decisions of the masses that establish reputations.

Page 61. *Swift:* Jonathan Swift (1667-1745), author of *Gulliver's Travels,* whose conduct has been sharply criticized by Thackeray and others.

Rousseau: Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), whose writings are often credited with helping bring about the French Revolution, lived an irregular life.

Ramsgate: A seaport on the Isle of Thanet, off the coast of England.

Isle of Dogs: A peninsula formed by a bend in the Thames in London.

Valclusa Fountain: A fountain near Avignon, France, made famous by the Italian poet Petrarch.

SIR WALTER SCOTT

John Gibson Lockhart, son-in-law of Walter Scott, published *Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott,* in seven volumes, in 1836-1838. It is regarded as one of

the greatest of English biographies. When Carlyle was writing this essay for the *London and Westminster Review*, all but the last volume had been published. Carlyle's sympathy with Scott is limited and does not compare with his feeling for Burns. Mr. H. J. C. Grierson in an excellent essay entitled "Scott and Carlyle" in *Essays and Studies*, vol. XIII, partially explains the difference as due to the fact that both Carlyle and Burns inherited a democratic and Presbyterian tendency, while Scott belonged in the aristocratic tradition.

Page 65. *American Cooper:* James Fenimore Cooper (1789-1851).

Old Hickory: A nickname for Andrew Jackson.

Improved drop at Newgate: Gallows at the Newgate prison.

Greenacre's: James Greenacre, a murderer, was hanged at Newgate in 1837.

Mrs. Rigmarole . . . Mr. Rigmarole: Names used by Carlyle for imaginary persons who live conventional, commonplace lives.

soirée: A social gathering in the evening.

Page 66. *star-and-garter:* Insignia of an order, such as the Order of the Garter.

gig or no gig: The possession of a gig was taken by Carlyle as a symbol of pretension to social rank.

Page 68. *Odyssey:* The famous Greek epic poem, attributed to Homer. Its hero is Ulysses.

Thomas Ellwood: Ellwood was an English author, but is remembered chiefly as the friend of Milton. Carlyle probably refers to *The History of the Life of Thomas Ellwood, Written by His Own Hand* (1714).

Page 69. *Pickwick: Pickwick Papers*, by Charles Dickens, appeared in serial form in 1836-1837.

Natty Leatherstocking: The hero of Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales.* This series was still incomplete when Carlyle wrote this essay.

Saint-Pierre: Bernardin de Saint-Pierre (1737-1814), a French romantic writer, known chiefly as author of the famous romance *Paul and Virginia*, the scene of which is Mauritius, an island in the Indian Ocean.

Colburn: Henry Colburn was a well-known London publisher of the time.

Moloch: A god to whom human sacrifices were offered. In II Kings 23:10 is a statement indicating that a father "might make his son or his daughter to pass through the fire to Molech [Moloch]." This is supposed to mean that the victim was burned.

Io Pæan: Ejaculation or song of praise to a deity, particularly Apollo, as god of healing.

Page 70. *Life and Correspondence of Hannah More:* Hannah More (1745-1833) wrote many works of a moral or religious character. The *Life* to which Carlyle refers was written by W. Roberts and appeared in 1834.

Page 71. *Damocles' sword:* Damocles, having praised the good fortunes of kings, was invited by Dionysius I of Syracuse to share his happiness. He was seated at a banquet, but, upon looking up, he saw a sword over his head hanging by a single hair.

Page 73. *Ballantynes:* The Ballantynes were Scottish printers with whom Scott was connected. It was their failure that involved Scott, who was associated with them in business, in bankruptcy.

Page 75. *Farinelli:* Carlo Broschi Farinelli (1705-1782), a famous Italian singer, who became influential at the Spanish court.

Lope de Vega: Spanish dramatist (1562-1635).

great man of Spain: Cervantes (1547-1616), author of *Don Quixote,* suffered hardship and imprisonment.

August Kotzebue: German dramatist (1761-1819), whose works were very successful, but whose literary reputation was not and is not very high.

Page 76. *Cadiz to Kamtchatka:* From Spain to eastern Siberia.

Orcus: Hades.

Page 77. *"Woe to them that are at ease in Zion":* Amos 6:1.

Babel: Babylon, used by Carlyle to symbolize worldly society.

Domdaniel: A cavern under the ocean where there was a seminary for wicked magicians, according to Arabian story.

Transcendentalists: Philosophers who believe that what is essentially true or real is the spiritual, not the material.

Page 79. *William Cobbett:* A vigorous English writer on politics (1762-1835).

Page 80. *Werterism:* Sentimental melancholy associated with the hero of Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther,* a novel published in 1774.

Beardie of Harden: The novelist's great grandfather, Walter Scott, who was known as "Beardie" because of his "venerable beard."

terrae filius: son of earth.

Tynedale: In Northumberland.

valde stalwartus homo: vigorously stalwart man. *Stalwartus* is formed by adding the Latin ending *us* to the English word *stalwart.*

Edial Boarding-School: In 1736 Samuel Johnson, then a young man, set up a private academy at Edial, near Lichfield. The school was a failure.

Page 82. *La Rochefoucault:* François La Rochefoucault (1613-1680), a famous French writer, author of *Maxims.*

Knox: John Knox (1505-1572), leader of the Reformation in Scotland, was greatly admired by Carlyle.

Page 83. *Hume:* David Hume (1711-1776) was the greatest of modern sceptical philosophers. Carlyle in his youth was greatly influenced by him.

Writer to the Signet: Writers to the Signet were and are a society of law agents in Scotland.

Page 85. *Flodden:* At Flodden, in Northumberland, occurred in 1513 one of the greatest of the battles between the English and the Scots, the Scots being defeated.

peel: A name for a small fortified dwelling, such as was built in the border country in the 16th century.

Page 88. *Monk Lewis:* Matthew Gregory Lewis (1775-1818), usually called Monk Lewis from his novel entitled *Ambrosio, or the Monk,* was a translator of German romantic literature.

Page 89. *Philosopher Fichte:* Fichte was the German philosopher who had most influence upon Carlyle. See the Introduction.

Page 90. *land of Cockaigne:* A fabulous land of plenty,

where the houses were made of food and the rivers were filled with wine.

Page 92. *Circe-draught:* Circe was an enchantress of Greek mythology, who turned men into swine.

Jean Paul: Jean Paul Friedrich Richter (1763-1825). See page 58 and note.

Phalaris' Bull: Phalaris, a tyrant of Sicily in the 6th century B.C., made human sacrifices in a heated brazen bull.

Page 93. *Voltaire:* The famous French writer of the 18th century who did much by his wit and satire to weaken religious and social tradition in France.

St. George: The patron saint of England.

Iago: The villain of Shakespeare's *Othello* and one of the most famous villains in all literature.

Page 94. *Della-Cruscan:* The Della Cruscans were a group of English poets who wrote near the end of the 18th century. Their poems were artificial and sentimental.

Hayley: William Hayley (1745-1820) was a minor English poet.

Page 95. *Loves of the Plants:* A botanical poem by Erasmus Darwin, grandfather of Charles Darwin, author of *Origin of Species.*

Loves of the Triangles: This poem satirizes *Loves of the Plants.* It was written by Canning and Frere, English satirical poets.

Page 97. *Chateaubriand:* François René Chateaubriand (1768-1848), a French romantic writer, who traveled in the United States when a young man and who wrote romances idealizing life among the Indians.

Ernulphus' Curse: A curse by Ernulphus, Bishop of Rochester (12th century), which is quoted in Sterne's *Tristram Shandy.*

Page 99. *the Prince:* George IV after 1820.

Page 101. *Tom Moore:* Thomas Moore (1779-1852), Irish poet, author of *Lalla Rookh* and *Irish Melodies.*

Author of Waverley: Scott's novels were published anonymously, and for a long time their writer was called "The Author of *Waverley,*" Waverley being the first of the series.

Carlton House: The London house occupied by the Prince Regent.

Page 102. *praeses:* The title of a Roman governor of a district; here applied to James Ballantyne as publisher and therefore master of writers.

Page 103. *ore rotundo:* Speaking in a pompous manner.

Graham: John Graham (c. 1774-1856) was a popular English tenor singer.

Page 104. *Abbotsford:* The home of Walter Scott on the Tweed River.

Mr. Constable: Archibald Constable (1774-1827), publisher of Scott's novels.

Jeremy Taylor: Famous 17th century writer of religious works.

Page 106. *Ferney:* The home of Voltaire in his later years. It is a village in France, near Geneva.

Captain Basil Hall: Basil Hall (1788-1844), naval officer and writer.

Page 107. *Sir Humphry Davy:* Famous English chemist and inventor of the safety-lamp. He lived 1778-1829.

Henry Mackenzie: A famous Scottish author, whose *The Man of Feeling* is a notable example of sentimental romance. He lived 1745-1831.

Page 108. *battue:* Beating the woods, etc., for game.

Page 109. *Hannah More and Lady Morgan:* Hannah More (1745-1833) was an English moral and religious writer, and Lady Morgan (c. 1783-1859) was an Irish novelist.

Page 111. *Boccaccio:* Famous 14th century Italian writer, author of the *Decameron.*

Page 113. *"round as the O of Giotto":* The note in Italian at the bottom of the page tells the story of how a courtier sent by Pope Benedict IX to learn something about the work of the famous artist Giotto (d. 1337) entered Giotto's shop one morning and asked for a specimen of his work for the Pope. "Giotto, who was always courteous, took a sheet of paper and a red pencil, pressed his arm to his side to make a compass of it, and then, with a turn of his hand, produced a circle so perfect in every particular that it was a marvel to see. This done,

he turned smiling to the courtier and said: 'Here is the drawing.' . . . From this the Pope and many of the well-informed courtiers recognised to what an extent Giotto surpassed all the other painters of the time in excellence. When the story became public it gave rise to a saying which is still used for people of dull wits: 'You are more simple (*tondo*) than Giotto's O.'" Vasari's *Lives of the Painters* (Everyman), vol. I, p. 72.

Page 114. *Goethe's Mignon:* Mignon is a character in Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister,* which was translated by Carlyle. Fenella is a character in Scott's *Peveril of the Peak.* Both are charming, fairy-like creatures.

Page 118. *Sheridan:* Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751-1816), author of *The School for Scandal, The Rivals,* and other popular plays.

Page 119. *Pierre Bayle:* A French sceptic and critic (1647-1706), author of the famous *Historical and Critical Dictionary.*

Page 120. *Matthew Bramble:* A fiery squire in Smollett's *Humphry Clinker.*

Faust of Mentz: Johann Faust or Fust (d. 1466) has been by some regarded as the inventor of printing, although Gutenberg, with whom he was associated, has the better claim to the honor.

Cadmus of Thebes: The legendary inventor of the alphabet.

Page 122. *Touchstone:* The clown of Shakespeare's *As You Like It.*

Page 123. *Baillie Nicol Jarvie:* A character in Scott's novel *Rob Roy.*

Hogg: James Hogg (1770-1835), a well known Scottish poet, often called "the Ettrick Shepherd."

THE DEATH OF GOETHE

When Carlyle received news of the death of Goethe, he said to a brother, "I feel as if I had a second time lost a Father." "The Death of Goethe," written and published in the *New Monthly Magazine* shortly after the end came to the greatest of German writers, is a sincere expression of Carlyle's feeling for the literary

master for whom he cared most. In the Introduction the reader will find a discussion of Goethe's influence upon Carlyle. It was Goethe, more than any other writer, who restored for Carlyle faith in the divinity of the world.

Page 129. *Elijah-translation:* Elijah, the Hebrew prophet, was carried to heaven in a chairot of fire.

Page 131. *the Philosopher:* When Carlyle wished to insert statements that might seem extravagant, he often ascribed them to imaginary authors, as he does in this case.

Vates: Latin for *soothsayer* or *prophet.*

Page 132. *if David Hume is at this hour pontiff of the world:* Carlyle here refers to the prevalence of Hume's sceptical philosophy.

Page 134. *Werter: The Sorrows of Young Werther* was a sentimental romance by the youthful Goethe.

Faust: The great poetic drama on which Goethe labored at different periods of his life.

Meisters Lehrjahre: One of Goethe's romances, translated by Carlyle.

German Hafiz: Hafiz was a famous Persian poet of the fourteenth century.

Farbenlehre: Theory of color. Goethe made important studies in this field.

Benvenuto Cellini: Goethe translated the famous autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini (1500-1571), Italian artist.

Torquato Tasso: Goethe's drama based upon the life of a famous Italian writer.

Iphigenie: Iphigenie auf Tauris, Goethe's famous classical drama.

Xenien: Epigrams written in collaboration with Schiller.

Page 136. *Mignon:* A fascinating girl in Goethe's novel *Wilhelm Meister:* See page 114.

Mephistopheles: The evil spirit or devil associated with Faust in Goethe's drama.

Schiller: A famous German poet and an intimate friend of Goethe's. He died in 1805 in his forty-sixth year.

Carl August: Grand Duke of Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach and close friend and patron of Goethe.

Page 137. *"Im Ganzen, Guten, Wahren resolut zu leben!":* Goethe actually wrote "Im Ganzen, Guten,

Schönen resolut zu leben!" Carlyle's substitution of the *True* for the *Beautiful* has excited comment; the substitution was probably unconscious, but it may indicate a difference between the German poet and his English admirer.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

This essay was published in the *Edinburgh Review* in 1829. In the twentieth century it is peculiarly timely, for the machinery which Carlyle decries is even more the master of the world than it was a hundred years ago. The introductory paragraphs, which are not an essential part of the essay, are here omitted.

Page 141. *Birmingham Fire-king:* Carlyle refers to the recent successes of the steamship.

the Cape: Cape of Good Hope.

Camoëns: Portuguese poet (1524-1580). In the *Lusiad* he celebrates the exploits of Vasco de Gama, the Portuguese explorer, who sailed around the Cape of Good Hope in 1497 and discovered the sea route to India. The *genius of the Cape* was Adamastor, a spirit that appeared to Vasco de Gama and prophesied misfortunes to befall expeditions to India.

Page 142. *Lancastrian machines; Hamiltonian machines:* Carlyle refers to the educational schemes of Joseph Lancaster (1778-1838), and of James Hamilton (1769-1829).

Page 143. *popularis aura:* Popular breeze, popular favor.

Newton: Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727).

Raphael: Italian painter (1483-1520).

Angelo: Michael Angelo (1475-1564), Italian architect, sculptor, and painter.

Mozart: Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791), famous Austrian composer.

Paternoster-row: Paternoster Row is a street in London which was long known as a place where books were published.

Queen Christina: Queen of Sweden from 1632 until 1654, when she abdicated. She persuaded the French philosopher Descartes to go to Stockholm in 1649, and he died there in the following year.

King Frederick for his Voltaire: Frederick the Great of Prussia (1712-1786) for a time entertained Voltaire, the famous French writer, at his court, but the association did not prove successful.

Bibliothèques, Glyptothèques, Technothèques: Libraries, museums for sculpture, and museums for works of art. By the last Carlyle probably means a collection of works of mechanical art.

Page 144. *Malebranche:* French philosopher (1638-1715).

Pascal: Famous French religious writer (1623-1662).

Descartes: French philosopher (1596-1650), often called the father of modern philosophy.

Fénelon: French priest and author (1651-1715).

Cousins and Villemains: Victor Cousin (1792-1867) and Abel François Villemain (1790-1870) were French writers and thinkers contemporary with Carlyle.

Professor Stewart: Dugald Stewart (1753-1828). See page 25 and note.

Page 145. *Lagrange or Laplace:* Joseph Louis Lagrange (1736-1813) was a French mathematician and author of *Mécanique Céleste.* Pierre Simon de Laplace (1749-1827) was a French astronomer and mathematician.

Mathesis: Mathematics as a mental discipline.

Plato: (c. 427-347 B.C.), Greek philosopher, with the possible exception of Aristotle the most influential of all philosophers.

Locke: John Locke (1632-1704), author of *Essay Concerning Human Understanding.*

Archimedes: Greek mathematician (287-212 B.C.).

Reid: Thomas Reid (1710-1796), founder of the Scottish school of "common sense" philosophers.

Hartley: David Hartley (1705-1757), English materialistic philosopher.

Page 146. *Darwin:* Erasmus Darwin (1731-1802), English poet, author of *The Botanic Garden,* a philosophical poem.

Priestley: Joseph Priestley (1733-1804), English clergyman and philosopher.

Dr. Cabanis: French philosopher (1757-1808). He was an extreme materialist.

Leuwenhock: Dutch naturalist (1632-1723), who for a time manufactured microscopes and made some improvements upon those previously in use.

Vauxhall: Vauxhall Gardens, London, a well-known resort.

Martinus Scriblerus: Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus was a satire written by Dr. John Arbuthnot, assisted by Pope, Swift, and others.

Vaucanson: Jacques de Vaucanson (1709-1782), French engineer and inventor.

Page 147. *Socrates:* Greek philosopher. See page 54 and note.

Hooker: Richard Hooker (c. 1553-1600), author of *The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity.*

Taylor: Jeremy Taylor (1613-1667), famous religious writer, author of *Holy Living* and *Holy Dying.*

Smith: Adam Smith (1723-1730), Scottish political economist and author of *The Wealth of Nations.*

DeLolme: Jean Louis Delolme (1740-1806), Swiss writer on political subjects. He lived in England for many years.

Bentham: Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), English writer and founder of the school of utilitarian philosophy, to which Carlyle was bitterly hostile.

Page 150. *Roger Bacon:* See page 54 and note.

Kepler: Johann Kepler (1571-1630), famous for his discovery of the laws of planetary motion, was a German astronomer.

Faust: The supposed inventor of printing; see page 120 and note.

Watt: James Watt (1736-1819) improved the steam engine and has been called its inventor.

Page 151. *Our English Revolution:* The Puritan Revolution of the seventeenth century.

Page 152. *Epictetus:* Stoic philosopher, who taught at Rome. Carlyle was influenced by him. See Introduction.

What countries produced Columbus and Las Casas?: Carlyle refers to Italy and Spain, Columbus being Italian by birth. Las Casas (1474-1566) was a Spanish Dominican monk who worked in the new world opened up by Spanish explorations.

Cortes, Pizarro: Cortes (1485-1547) was the Spanish conqueror of Mexico. Pizarro (1471-1541), also a Spanish soldier, conquered Peru.

Alba: Duke of Alba (1507-1582), a great Spanish general.

Ximenes: Francisco Ximenes (1436-1517), Spanish statesman.

Philip II: King of Spain 1556-1598, a strongly Catholic monarch who wished to restore Catholicism in the Protestant countries of Europe. It was in his reign that the Spanish Armada was defeated by the English.

Siege of Leyden: Leyden, a city in Holland, was besieged by the Spanish, unsuccessfully, for several months in 1574.

William the Silent: Prince of Orange from 1544 to 1584, and a famous general who opposed the Duke of Alba.

Egmont: Count of Egmont and well-known general. He was seized and executed by the Duke of Alba in 1568.

De Witt: Jan De Witt (1625-1672), Dutch statesman.

Castlereagh: Robert Stewart, known as Viscount Castlereagh, (1769-1822), a British statesman who was regarded by many of his contemporaries as a cruel reactionary.

Burghley: Lord Burghley (1520-1598), the great statesman under Queen Elizabeth.

Sidney: Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586), English writer and general, distinguished for his knightly courtesy.

Sheridan Knowles: Author of plays and actor (1784-1862).

Beau Brummel: George Bryan Brummell (1778-1840), a famous English dandy and friend of the Prince of Wales, later George IV.

Page 154. *Constant:* Benjamin Constant (1767-1830), a French writer. His most important work was an account of the development of religion.

Ignatius Loyola: The Spanish founder of the Society of Jesus. He lived 1491-1556.

John Knox: See page 82 and note.

Wickliffe: John Wyclif (c. 1324-1384) was an English reformer, contemporary with Chaucer.

Henry the Eighth: King of England 1509-1547. During his reign the English church was separated from the Roman Catholic Church and the king was made the head.

Euphuist: A writer of affected and highly ornamented prose or verse. The name is associated with John Lyly's *Euphues,* a romance published in 1579.

Luther: German reformer: See page 21 and note.

Page 155. *Sir Hudibras:* The hero of Samuel Butler's satirical poem *Hudibras:* See page 9.

Page 156. *Memnon Statue:* A colossal statue in Egypt which, it is said, gave forth musical sounds when touched by the rays of the morning sun.

Page 157. *Moloch:* See page 69 and note.

Argus: A Greek legendary character with a hundred eyes.

Page 159. *Heraclides and Pelasgi:* Descendants of Hercules and an ancient race of Greece respectively. Carlyle refers to earliest historical times in Europe.

Hercules: A constellation, used by Carlyle to symbolize the physical or mechanical power that threatens to dominate the human world.

BOSWELL'S LIFE OF JOHNSON

This essay was the result of the appearance of a new edition of the most famous of all English biographies. *The Life of Samuel Johnson,* by James Boswell, had been published originally in 1791. The edition which Carlyle reviewed was edited by John Wilson Croker (1780-1857), a well-known politician, and attracted considerable attention following its appearance in 1831. Macaulay had an essay on the subject almost at the time when Carlyle's article appeared in *Fraser's Magazine.* As Mr. Wilson points out, the views of the two writers are almost diametrically opposed. "Macaulay maintained that Boswell wrote the best biography in English by dint of his defects, his shamelessness and other weaknesses . . . Carlyle's case was that Boswell succeeded in spite of his defects, because he 'had an "open sense," an open loving heart,

which so few have': and a reverence for real worth which mastered his vanity and the prejudices of his education and position." (Wilson's *Carlyle to the French Revolution*, p. 278).

Page 165. *Æsop's Fly:* The reference is to the *Fables* of Æsop, a Greek supposed to have lived in the sixth century B.C.

Io Paeans: See page 69 and note.

Paradise Lost: Milton received five pounds for the first edition of his great epic.

Page 167. *Shovel-hatted look:* Carlyle used the term "shovel-hatted" to refer to certain orthodox clergymen because of the appearance of the hats worn by some of them.

Page 168. *'Ma foi, monsieur . . . '*: "Indeed, monsieur, our happiness depends on the manner in which our blood circulates."

Page 169. *Edial School:* A school set up by Johnson which did not succeed.

Sextum quid: Sixth something.

Page 170. *Hawkins, Tyers, Murphy, Piozzi:* Sir John Hawkins (1719-1789) wrote a life of Johnson which was published with an edition of Johnson's works in 1787. T. Tyers and Arthur Murphy both wrote short lives of Johnson. Mrs. Piozzi (1741-1821), who as Mrs. Thrale was one of Dr. Johnson's most intimate friends, wrote *Anecdotes of the Late Samuel Johnson* and published *Letters to and from the Late Samuel Johnson*, both of which contain important biographical material.

Page 171. *"Corsica Boswell":* Boswell was in Corsica in 1765-1766 and published in 1768 an account of his visit which attracted considerable notice.

Page 172. *Touchwood Auchinleck:* Boswell's father, Alexander Boswell, Lord Auchinleck.

Gamaliel: The teacher of Paul the Apostle. See Acts 22:3.

Page 174. *Bolt Court:* The London street where Johnson lived in the closing years of his life.

Page 175. *Zany-Prophet:* Prophet who plays the clown, referring to Boswell.

Page 176. *Pan:* The Greek god of nature.

Page 179. *Euclid's Elements:* Euclid lived at Alexandria about 300 B.C. The *Elements* is a famous mathematical work.

Herr Sauerteig: A fictitious character invented by Carlyle.

Mitre Tavern: A London tavern frequented by Dr. Johnson.

Page 180. *Smolletts and Belshams:* Tobias Smollett (1721-1771), the English novelist, wrote a history of England. William Belsham (1752-1827) was an English historical writer.

Walpole, and the Belhams, etc.: Carlyle names various prime ministers of the eighteenth century.

Page 181. *Chancery:* Court of the Chancellor, in Carlyle's time the highest English court under Parliament.

Woolsack: Seat of the English Lord Chancellor in the House of Lords.

Redbook Lists: Official lists of those in government service.

Court Calendars: An official publication of the English government.

Robertson: William Robertson (1721-1793), author of a history of Scotland.

Page 182. *Æneas Sylvius:* Became Pope Pius II and lived 1405-1464. When he was a young man he traveled in England and Scotland.

Mary Stuart: Mary Queen of Scots (1542-1587) married Lord Darnley in 1565. He was murdered, perhaps with her consent, in 1567.

Page 185. *Natus sum; esuriebam, quærebam; nunc repletus requiesco:* I was born, I ate, I inquired; now, satisfied, I rest.

Page 186. *Jean Paul:* Jean Paul Richter (1763-1825), one of Carlyle's favorite German authors.

Page 187. *Woolsthorpe:* Sir Isaac Newton was born at Woolsthorpe in Lincolnshire.

Page 188. *Popinjays:* Empty-headed dandies.

Mumbojumbos: Mumbo Jumbo, probably originally an African deity, is a bugaboo used to frighten women. A native man is disguised to play the part. See Vachel Lindsay's *The Congo.*

Page 190. *Ariel:* The delicate and gentle spirit that serves Prospero in Shakespeare's *Tempest.*

Caliban: The malignant monster of *Tempest.*

à chacun selon sa capacité, à chaque capacité selon ses œuvres: To each according to his capacity, and to each capacity according to its works.

Birmingham-lacquer age: Superficial and pretentious age.

Mr. Hector: A schoolfellow of Johnson's, who gave Boswell information for the *Life.*

Page 191. *Corporal Trim:* The servant of Uncle Toby in Sterne's *Tristram Shandy,* one of Carlyle's favorite books.

Page 193. *Market Bosworth:* Johnson was "employed as usher in the school of Market-Bosworth, in Leicestershire."

Edmund Cave: The London bookseller and printer, with whom Johnson was later associated.

Page 194. *Dr. Parr:* Samuel Parr (1747-1825), English scholar and teacher, who is said to have imitated the manners of Dr. Johnson.

Lith: Scottish word for *joint.*

Page 195. *Pactolus:* A river in Asia Minor, where gold was found in early times.

Otway: Thomas Otway (1652-1685), dramatist, who died in poverty.

Mr. Boyce: Samuel Boyse, one of Dr. Johnson's acquaintances, who wrote Latin verses in the manner described.

carpe diem: Enjoy the day.

Page 196. *Mr. Browne:* Isaac Hawkins Browne (1705-1760), English poet, who wrote in Latin as well as in English. Johnson said he was "one of the first wits of this country."

Page 198. *Tasso:* Torquato Tasso (1544-1595), Italian poet, author of *Jerusalem Delivered.*

Mæcenasship: Mæcenas, (d. 8 B.C.) was the famous Roman patron of men of letters, particularly of Vergil and Horace.

toga virilis: The toga of manhood, assumed by boys when about fourteen years old.

Page 199. *Mæcenases proper in the West End of Lon-*

don; and the Mæcenases virtual of St. John's Gate and Paternoster Row: Patrons among the aristocracy, and patrons among the publishers.

Osborne: Thomas Osborne, a bookseller, of whom Johnson said, "Sir, he was impertinent to me, and I beat him."

Lord Chesterfield: Philip Stanhope, Lord Chesterfield (1694-1773), author of the famous *Letters to his Son,* who failed to assist Johnson when in need, but was willing to seem to be his patron when his dictionary had been completed.

Page 201. ὑποκριτὴς: One who plays a part on the stage; a hypocrite.

Reform Bills: Carlyle has in mind the Reform Bill of 1832, which was regarded as revolutionary by many Englishmen.

Page 202. *Bolingbrokes:* Lord Bolingbroke (1678-1751), English statesman and writer. He was a deist, and his views influenced Pope.

Toland: John Toland (c. 1669-1722), an English deist, and author of *Christianity Not Mysterious.*

Bayle: Pierre Bayle (1647-1706), a French philosophical sceptic.

Trulliber: A coarse and unpleasant parson in Fielding's *Joseph Andrews.*

Jacobite: One who supported the pretensions of the James II or his descendants to the English throne after the Revolution of 1688.

Page 203. *"Glorious Revolution":* The Revolution of 1688, when James II was driven from the English throne.

Charles: Charles II, King of England from 1660 to 1685.

Jeffries: George Jeffreys, Lord Jeffreys (1648-1689), a famous judge, who presided at the trial of many of the Duke of York's enemies, including Algernon Sidney.

Russel: William Russell, known as Lord Russell, (1639-1683), a Whig and an opponent of the Duke of York, was beheaded.

Sydney: Algernon Sidney (1622-1683), was executed, like Lord Russell, for opposing the Duke of York, heir to the throne, because he was a Catholic.

Page 205. *Burke:* Edmund Burke (1729-1797), the

great English orator and statesman, author of *Speech on Conciliation with America.*

Wilkes: John Wilkes (1727-1797), English radical politician.

Page 206. *Phlegethon:* A river of fire in Hades.

Fleet Ditch: A stream which flows into the Thames near Fleet street. It is now used as a sewer and is covered.

Page 207. *Pillar of Fire:* Carlyle refers to the pillar of fire that guided the Israelites in their flight from Egypt.

"in the Church of St. Clement Danes": A church in Westminster. A bronze statue of Johnson is in the yard.

Page 208. *Kerne or Gallowglass:* See Macbeth I: ii. They are names given to different kinds of Irish soldiers.

Page 209. *Tempus edax rerum!:* Time devouring all things.

ferax: Fruitful.

Page 210. *Giaours and Harolds:* Romantic poems like Byron's *Childe Harold* or *The Giaour.*

Savage: Richard Savage (1698-1743), a wild and dissolute poet with whom Johnson was acquainted and whose reputation is due chiefly to the *Life* written by Johnson.

Page 211. *Constantine's Banner:* The reference is to Constantine the Great, Emperor of Rome from 306 to 337, who, according to legend, became a Christian upon seeing a flaming cross in the sky with the words: "By this conquer," and who afterward used a banner representing the Christian religion.

Page 212. *vomissement du diable:* Devil's vomit.

Goldsmith: Oliver Goldsmith (1728-1774), author of *The Vicar of Wakefield,* and close friend of Dr. Johnson, was regarded by Boswell as childishly vain and foolish.

Page 213. *Thralia:* Mrs. Thrale.

res gestæ: Things done.

Stat Parvi *nominis umbra:* He stands in the shadow of a small name.

Page 214. *Church-Overseer:* Bishop.

Tobacco Browne: See page 196 and note.

Page 216. *Pitt Administrations:* William Pitt was prime minister of England from 1783 to 1801 and from 1804 until his death in 1806. He was one of Napoleon's most

determined enemies, his most powerful weapon probably being subsidies to Continental powers opposing the French.

Page 218. *Giant Despair:* A character in Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress.*

Page 219. *Whitefield:* George Whitefield (1714-1770), a famous English preacher who was associated with John Wesley in founding Methodism.

Page 221. *Doctor Levett:* Johnson's physician, to whom he was strongly attached.

Sterne: Laurence Sterne (1713-1768), author of *Tristram Shandy,* to a passage in which Carlyle here refers.

Salve magna parens: Hail, Great Parent.

Rasselas: Dr. Johnson's romance.

Page 225. *Dr. Adams:* William Adams, Master of Pembroke College, Oxford, and a close friend of Dr. Johnson's.

acerrimi ingenii, paucarum literarum: Of violent temper and little learning.

Rousseau: Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), a French-Swiss writer who had great influence during the latter part of the eighteenth century.

Page 226. *D'Alemberts and Diderots:* Jean le Rond d'Alembert (1717-1783), French mathematician and philosopher. Denis Diderot (1713-1784), French writer and philosopher.

ON HISTORY

Carlyle was deeply interested in history from his earliest years. Before he wrote any of his histories, he had formulated, as this essay shows, a philosophy of history represented by the statement: "History is the essence of innumerable Biographies."

Page 231. *Sibylline Books:* A collection of Greek oracles supposed to have been given to Tarquin the Proud, king of Rome, who according to tradition reigned in the sixth century B.C., by one of the Sibyls, who were women possessing powers of prophecy.

Copts: Native Egyptians.

Page 232. *Herodotus:* Greek historian (c. 484-c. 424 B.C.).

Froissart: Jean Froissart (1337-1410?), famous French historian.

Marlborough: John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough (1650-1722), one of the greatest of English generals.

Page 234. *he who first led armies over the Alps:* Hannibal (247-183 B.C.).

Marathons: In 490 B.C. the Greeks defeated the Persians at Marathon in one of the famous battles of history.

Morgartens: Morgarten was the place of a battle between Swiss and Austrians, fought in 1315, the former being victorious.

Dracos: Draco (7th century B.C.), who formulated the first written laws for Athens.

Hampden: John Hampden (1594-1643), an English statesman who opposed Charles I.

Page 235. *"Crossing of the Rubicon":* When Cæsar crossed the Rubicon, a small stream in Italy, in 49 B.C., he began a war which changed his own history as well as that of his country.

"Impeachment of Strafford": Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford (1593-1641), chief adviser of Charles I, was impeached by the Long Parliament and was executed. This event was an important step toward the Puritan Revolution which led to the execution of Charles I in 1649.

"Convocation of Notables": An assembly of prominent persons in France just before the French Revolution.

Page 237. *between Aries and Libra:* Constellations on opposite sides of the heavens.

Page 239. *Ecumenic Council:* Universal or general council of the church.

Page 240. *Magi and Druids:* The Magi were members of a Persian priestly caste. The Druids were members of a religious order of the early Celts.

Brückers: Johann Jacob Brucker (1696-1770), a German clergyman and writer, who wrote a history of philosophy that was translated into English.

Bühles: Johann Gottlieb Buhle (1763-1821), a German professor of philosophy and writer on the history of philosophy.

Enfields: William Enfield (1741-1797), an English clergyman and author of *The History of Philosophy* and other works.

Eichhorns: Johann Gottfried Eichhorn (1752-1827), a German scholar and theologian, was the author of works on literary history as well as of studies in the Bible.

Wartons: Thomas Warton (1728-1790) wrote a *History of English Poetry.*

Page 241. *Montesquieu:* French author of *The Spirit of Laws;* he lived 1689-1755.

Hallam: Henry Hallam (1777-1859) wrote a *Constitutional History of England.*

Goguets and Beckmanns: Antoine-Yves Goguet (1716-1758), a French scholar, and Johann Beckmann (1739-1811), German physician and scholar.

COUNT CAGLIOSTRO

Count Cagliostro appeared in *Fraser's Magazine* for July and August, 1833. When it was just begun, Carlyle called it "a foolish story about a certain Italian 'King of Quacks,' whom I have long been curious about, and am now going to make known to all the world—for some forty guineas, if I can get them." The essay shows that Carlyle, like Browning, had a keen interest in curious or subtle evil in human nature.

Page 245. *Herr Sauerteig:* One of Carlyle's fictitious characters.

Aristotelian requisites: Aristotle (384-322 B.C.), the Greek philosopher, wrote on the theory of poetry. He is responsible for the famous saying that pity and fear are elements of tragedy.

Page 246. *Grimaldi:* Joseph Grimaldi (1779-1837), English pantomimist and actor.

Pasquils: Lampoons.

Page 247. *Zerdusht:* Zoroaster, founder of the religion of ancient Persia.

Page 248. *a Tartarus and an Elysium:* A hell and a heaven.

Paphos-islet: Paphos was an ancient city on the island of Cyprus, where Venus was supposed to have been born

from the sea-foam. Carlyle may have thought of it as an island.

Aesthetische Springwurzeln: Æsthetic Origins, the title of the supposed Sauerteig book from which Carlyle pretends to quote.

Page 249. *Transcendentals:* Transcendentalists, or philosophers who believe in the superiority of spirit over matter.

Sage Althotas: Althotas was an alchemist of Rhodes, who taught alchemy to Cagliostro.

Scherif of Mecca: An Arabian sovereign, supposed to trace his descent from Mahomet.

Trebisond: In Asia Minor.

Page 250. *Grand Cophta:* Title assumed by Cagliostro.

Mendez Pinto: A Portuguese traveler (c. 1509-1583), who visited in Japan, China, and other countries. His *Peregrination* is said to be somewhat inaccurate, though not seriously so. He was once regarded as very untrustworthy, however.

Autolycus: Carlyle refers to a character in Greek mythology, who was a notable thief, having the power to make himself and what he stole invisible. Compare also the Autolycus of Shakespeare's *A Winter's Tale.*

Apollonius: Apollonius Tyan (c. 4 B.C.-c. 97 A.D.), who was regarded as a magician but who, apparently, did not intentionally deceive.

Page 251. *Seraphina:* Cagliostro's wife, whose real name was Lorenza Feliciani.

Geisterseher: Ghost-seer.

Grosskophta: Grand Cophta. See p. 250 and note.

Page 252. *Lord Mansfield:* William Murray, Earl of Mansfield (1705-1793), was a famous English judge.

the Diamond Necklace: A valuable necklace which caused a scandal in the court of Louis XVI of France. Carlyle wrote an account of the affair called "The Diamond Necklace."

Lord George Gordon: A well-known political agitator (1751-1793).

Exempts, Sbirri, Alguazils: Officers of justice from various countries.

Mémoires de Casanova: Casanova (1725-1798) was a

famous Italian adventurer and profligate. His *Memoirs* tell the story of his life.

Page 253. *Mémoires pour le Comte de Cagliostro: Memoirs for Count Cagliostro.*

Lettre du Comte de Cagliostro au Peuple Anglais: Letter of Count Cagliostro to the English People.

Cagliostro démasqué à Varsovie, en 1780: Cagliostro unmasked at Warsaw, in 1780.

Vie de Joseph Balsamo, connu sous le Nom de Comte Cagliostro: Life of Joseph Balsamo, known by the Name of Count Cagliostro.

Page 255. *fasti:* Records.

Beppo Maldetto: The accursed Beppo.

Page 258. *Martyrology:* A catalogue of martyrs, with something about their lives, used in the Catholic Church.

Psyche: In classical mythology, Psyche, a maiden representing the soul, is supposed to have wings like a butterfly, or is even represented as a butterfly.

Page 263. *Peace of Paris:* The treaty of 1763 between Great Britain and France, Spain, and Portugal.

Her next awakening: At the time of the American Revolution.

Cabalists: Persons who practise a mystic art.

Swedenborgians: Followers of Swedenborg (1688-1772), a Swedish philosopher who claimed to have direct communication with the world of spirit.

Illuminati: Various groups have been called *illuminati*, but Carlyle apparently refers to a group of eighteenth century reformers who expected to raise men to perfection.

Crucified Nuns and Devils of Loudon: I have not identified these.

Page 264. *Saint-Germain:* The so-called Comte de Saint Germain was an adventurer who played an important part in the plots of the French court following 1750. He claimed that he had the elixir of life.

Dr. Grahams: Dr. James Graham (1745-1794), who invented a bed guaranteed to cure sterility.

Chevalier d'Eon: A French diplomat and secret agent who could disguise himself as a woman. He served Louis XV.

Psalmanazar: George Psalmanazar (c. 1679-1763), a French adventurer, who posed as various kinds of persons and who wrote books that were afterwards proved fictitious.

Ghost of Cock-lane: A man named Parsons, with a small daughter, perpetrated the frauds connected with the so-called "Cock Lane Ghost" in 1762. Dr. Johnson was interested and, according to his own statement, "assisted in detecting the cheat."

Veneficae: Female poisoners.

Mathematici: Astrologers.

Apollonius: see page 250 and note.

Ricos Hombres: Men of noble birth or of illustrious family.

Page 266. *Margaret:* The young girl in Goethe's *Faust* who is betrayed by Faust.

Place de la Révolution: Place of the Revolution, where the guillotine was.

Page 267. *Castlereagh spy:* Lord Castlereagh, a British statesman who was hated as an instrument of oppression. He committed suicide in 1822.

Page 268. *Scottish Humorist:* Presumably Carlyle himself.

Page 269. *Adonis:* A beautiful young man in Greek mythology. He was loved by Aphrodite.

Page 270. *Saint-James in Compostella:* Compostella in Spain, a famous shrine, where Saint James the Greater Apostle was supposed to be buried.

Our Lady in Loretto: Loretto is a town in Italy and the seat of a shrine of the Virgin Mary.

Proteus-Incognito: Proteus was a Greek sea-god who assumed many different shapes.

Page 274. *Fortunatus'-Pocket:* Fortunatus was a legendary character whose purse could never be emptied.

Crassus'-Drink: Marcus Licinius Crassus (c. 115-53 B.C.), a Triumvir with Caesar and Pompey, was executed by having liquid gold poured down his throat.

Little-go: Lottery.

Page 277. *Philosopher's stone:* A substance which, according to the alchemist, would transmute baser metals into gold.

Page 278. *Veni Creator Spiritus: Come, Creator Spirit,* a Latin hymn.

Te Deum: An ancient hymn beginning *Te Deum Laudamus, We Praise Thee, O God.*

Memento, Domine, David et omnis mansuetudinis ejus: Lord, remember David and all his afflictions.

Helios, Mene, Tetragrammaton: Helios is the name of the Greek God of the Sun; *Mene* is from "Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin," the words which appeared on the wall at the feast of Belshazzar and which were interpreted by Daniel; *Tetragrammaton* is the four consonants making up the name of the Supreme Being in Hebrew. The name was not supposed to be pronounced.

Essai sur les Illuminés: Essay upon the Illuminated.

Page 282. *Eleutheromania:* Crazed Love of freedom.

Adam Weisshaupt's Illuminati: The Illuminati, founded by Adam Weishaupt (1748-1830), were a group of republican freethinkers. They hoped to make the human race perfect. See p. 263 and note.

Panourgos: A rogue or, literally, one ready to do anything.

Jachin and Boaz: Two Pillars in Solomon's temple.

Page 283. *Undine:* Water-spirit. Carlyle probably refers to the Undine of the well-known tale by Fouqué, Baron de la Motte, a German writer.

Endymion: In Greek mythology, a young man who fell in love with Diana, the goddess of the moon. Hecate, who was a deity practising and teaching witchcraft, was also a moon goddess.

Laquais-de-place French: The French of lackeys or uneducated persons.

Inquisition Gurney: On whose work Carlyle is mainly relying. See p. 253.

Page 287. *Lavater:* Johann Caspar Lavater (1741-1801), a Swiss poet.

Page 288. *Schöne Seele:* Beautiful soul.

galimathias: Meaningless talk. *Galimatias* is the usual form.

Page 291. *Porcus:* Latin for *hog.*

De l'Ami des Humains, etc.: Know the traits of the Friend of Humanity: All his days are marked by good

deeds; he prolongs life; he relieves poverty; the pleasure of being useful is his only reward.

Page 292. *Prince Cardinal de Rohan:* Louis René Edouard Rohan (1734-1803) was closely associated with the French court and its intrigues during the reign of Louis XVI.

Page 294. *Ragusan:* There are two Ragusas, one a city and seaport in Dalmatia on the Adriatic, and the other a city in Sicily. Presumably the latter is intended.

Page 296. *Garden of Trianon:* At Versailles, where Queen Marie Antoinette resided.

Calchas: A soothsayer who accompanied the Greeks in their expedition against Troy.

Circe de La Motte-Valois: Circe was a Greek enchantress who had the power to transform men into swine.

Page 297. *Mémoire pour le Comte de Cagliostro, en présence des autres Co-Accusés: Memoir for Count Cagliostro, in the presence of Others Accused with Him.*

Voleuse: Thief.

Page 298. *Courrier de l'Europe:* A periodical called *Courier of Europe.*

Page 304. *Popish-Riot Lord George:* Lord George Gordon: See p. 252 and note.

Page 305. *Emperor Joseph:* Emperor Joseph II (1741-1790), of Austria.

Liber memorialis de Calcostro dum esset Roborctti: Memorial Book Concerning Cagliostro While He Was at Roboredo.

Lasciate ogni speranza, voi che 'ntrate!: "Leave hope behind, you who enter here." This was the inscription at the entrance to Dante's Inferno.

Page 307. *Daniel Defoe:* Defoe (1661-1731) was the author of a *Political History of the Devil.*

CHARACTERISTICS

This essay is important as a revelation of the mind of Carlyle during his early maturity, represented more fully by *Sartor Resartus,* when he had absorbed the teachings of Goethe and the German philosophers. It was published in the *Edinburgh Review* in December, 1831, and

was ostensibly a review of a three volume work entitled *Origin and Prospects of Man,* by Thomas Hope (1770-1831), and of *Philosophical Lectures,* a German work by Friedrich von Schlegel (1772-1829). Regarding the essay Carlyle wrote to his brother John: "I have corrected the proof sheets of the article *Characteristics* for Napier [the editor], who received it with respect, yet finds it 'inscrutable' on first perusal! My own fear was it was too *scrutable:* for it indicates decisively enough that Society (in my view) is utterly condemned to destruction, and even now beginning its long travail-throes of New-birth."

Page 314. *Walter Shandy:* The father of Tristram Shandy in Sterne's novel.

Sadler's Wells: A London theater.

Page 315. *a flexor longus and a flexor brevis:* Muscles in the leg and foot.

Spinning Dervishes: The dervishes are members of Mohammedan orders, the "spinning dervishes" being one of the more important of these orders.

Page 320. *Runes:* Signs of the alphabet used by early Teutonic peoples.

Hieroglyphs: The characters with which the early Egyptians wrote.

Page 321. *Montesquieu:* Author of *The Spirit of Laws.* See page 35 and note.

Page 322. *Decii:* Members of a famous Roman family.

Preux Chevaliers: Valiant knights.

Page 323. *Theocracy:* A form of government of which God is the head.

Sadducees and Pharisees: Jewish sects of the time of Christ and before.

Page 325. *Calefactor:* Something that will make warm.

Select-Vestries Bill: This refers to an act passed in 1831 relating to the government of certain London parishes.

Page 326. *a Reform Bill:* The first Reform Bill was being considered at the time of the writing of the essay.

DeLolmes: Jean Louis Delolme (1740-1806), a Swiss, wrote a *Constitution of England.*

Benthams: Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), the Utili-

tarian philosopher, wrote in opposition to the English Constitution.

Page 327. *The Encyclopedists:* The writers of a great French encyclopedia which encouraged revolutionary ideas.

"Vous vous écoutez trop!": "You nurse yourself too much!"

Page 328. *Sic vos non vobis:* Thus do ye, but not for yourselves.

Page 330. *Sorrows of Werter:* Goethe's famous sentimental romance.

Author of Waverley: Walter Scott, whose novels—after *Waverley,* the first—were published as by "The Author of Waverley."

Sterne: Laurence Sterne, author of *Tristram Shandy.*

Page 331. *Kames:* Henry Home, Lord Kames (1696-1782), author of *Elements of Criticism.*

Bossu: René le Bossu (1631-1680), French author of a treatise on epic poetry.

Page 332. *Pyrrhonism:* Scepticism of an extreme kind.

Pyrro: A Greek philosopher who lived from about 360 B.C. to about 270 B.C. He doubted the evidence of the senses.

Hume: David Hume, the great Scottish sceptic.

Page 335. *Werterism, Byronism,* even *Brummelism:* The sentimentality, the rebelliousness, and the dandyism of various groups.

Page 337. *Friedrich Schlegel:* A German romantic writer (1772-1829), who became a Catholic; his *Lectures* are being reviewed by Carlyle.

Hazlitt: William Hazlitt (1778-1830), a famous English essayist, whose violent emotions caused him to lead a restless life.

Page 341. *Anastasius:* The name of a novel by Hope which had appeared in 1819.

Page 342. *Ptolemy:* A second century astronomer of Alexandria who believed the earth the center of a universe consisting of various spheres. His system was generally accepted until the 16th century.

Kepler: Johann Kepler (1571-1630), German astronomer who discovered the laws of the motions of the planets known as Kepler's laws.

Page 343. *Blackhole of Calcutta:* A small room about eighteen feet square in which 146 British prisoners were put in 1756, all but 23 of whom died during one night.

Page 344. *Kantism . . . Fichteism,* etc.: Various forms of philosophy. Carlyle was particularly influenced by Fichte and Schelling.

Page 346. *Eldorados:* Imaginary places where wealth or other desirable things abound. Literally, *El Dorado* means "The Golden."

"My inheritance," etc.: The quotation is a translation of lines by Goethe.

From

SARTOR RESARTUS

Sartor Resartus, which contains the noblest statement of Carlyle's philosophy, was written at Craigenputtock in 1830-1831. The title, meaning literally "The Tailor Patched," suggests the theme. The book is a philosophy of clothes, but the "clothes" are the forms of things—the institutions of society and religion or even the body of man or the physical universe itself—in which the truly spiritual is both expressed and hidden. Carlyle imagined a German philosopher, Herr Teufelsdröckh (Devil's Dirt), whose life he tells and whose ideas he pretends to make clear. The life is very largely Carlyle's own. For example, the incident related in "The Everlasting No" is a definite experience of Carlyle's which occurred in 1821. Publishers were afraid to take the manuscript on account of the extravagance of the style and other unusual characteristics; finally it was published in *Fraser's Magazine* in 1833-1834.

Page 350. *Towgood-and-Blumine business:* Teufelsdröckh had loved Blumine, and his love had apparently been returned, but the affair was mysteriously broken off and Teufelsdröckh's friend Towgood had married her. Carlyle's own unfortunate love for Margaret Gordon may be reflected in the story.

Profit-and-Loss-Philosophy: The Utilitarian philosophy,

which made desire for pleasure and fear of pain the controlling elements in human conduct.

Dr. Graham's Celestial-Bed: See p. 264 and note.

Page 351. *Prometheus Vinctus: Prometheus Bound* is the drama by Æschylus, which tells the story of the struggle between Prometheus, who stole fire from heaven for the use of man, and Jupiter, who bound Prometheus to a rock. Prometheus is often said to be symbolical of mankind.

Sibyl-cave of Destiny: Carlyle refers to the visit of Æneas to the Sibyl.

Diogenes: That is, Diogenes Teufelsdröckh.

Page 352. *Know thyself:* A famous Greek saying which was inscribed over the portico of the temple at Delphi.

Page 353. *Golgotha:* Place where Jesus was crucified. Literally the word means *skull.*

Page 354. *Rue-Saint-Thomas de l'Enfer:* This experience really occurred in Leith Walk, Edinburgh.

Nebuchadnezzar's Furnace: In which Daniel and his companions were thrown but from which they escaped unharmed.

Page 355. *Tophet:* Hell; or, more accurately, the furnace where sacrifices of human beings were made to Moloch.

Baphometic: Baphomet was an idol which members of the order of Templars were accused of worshiping. Carlyle's use of the adjective connected with this name is not very clear.

Page 357. *Apage Satana:* "Get thee behind me, Satan!" Matthew 4:10

Page 358. *Harmattan wind:* "A dry, dust-laden wind blowing from the interior on the Atlantic coast of Africa in certain seasons."

Page 359. *Schreckhorn:* Literally, "Peak of Terror." Carlyle presumably refers to the Great Schreckhorn, in the Bermese Alps.

Nova Zembla: A double island in the Arctic Ocean, north of Russia.

Page 360. *Sanctuary of Sorrow:* From Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister.*

Page 361. *Hochheimer:* A German wine.

Ophiucus: A northern constellation, supposed to represent a man.

Page 362. *Zeno:* The founder of the Stoic school of philosophy. He died about 264 B.C.

Page 363. *Voltaire:* The 18th century French writer, whose task, according to Carlyle, was destructive and already completed.

Page 364. *Fichte's Wissenschaftslehre: Theory of Science,* referring to Fichte's earlier philosophical writings.

Page 366. *Natural Supernaturalism:* Probably this chapter is the best single statement of Carlyle's philosophy.

Palingenesia: New birth, or the doctrine of metempsychosis. Carlyle's special use of the term refers to the new possibilities of understanding opened up by his transcendental philosophy.

Page 368. *Laplace:* Pierre Simon de Laplace (1749-1827), French mathematician and astronomer.

Herschel: Sir William Herschel (1738-1822), an English astronomer, who divided the heavens into squares called "minutes" for the purpose of computing the numbers of the stars.

Page 370. *Luther's Picture of the Devil:* The Devil was said to have appeared to Luther, who drove him away by throwing the inkstand at him.

Fortunatus: A legendary hero. See page 274 and note.

Wahngasse of Weissnichtwo: Dream Street of Know-Not-Where, in which Teufelsdröckh lived.

Seneca: Lucius Annæus Seneca (c. 4 B.C.-65 A.D.), a Stoic philosopher of Rome.

Page 372. *Orpheus:* Son of Apollo and a musician of strange power.

Amphion: A son of Zeus. Under the influence of his lyre the stones of their own accord moved to their places in the walls of Thebes which were being built.

Page 373. *Issus and Arbela:* The names of Alexander's victories over the Persians.

Moscow Retreats: Napoleon's forced retreat from Moscow in 1812 is regarded as the turning point in his career.

Austerlitz: At Austerlitz Napoleon won a great victory over the Russian and Austrian forces in 1805.

Page 374. *Cimmerian night:* The Cimmerians, according to Homer, lived in a land where the sun never shone.

"We are such stuff": From Shakespeare's *Tempest,* Act IV, Scene 1.

From

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

"The French Revolution by Carlyle is as good a history as any yet written, and the publication of it was a more important event than Jena or Waterloo. It showed that righteousness was a law of nature, like gravitation, and that the evolution of society in Europe was inevitable and right." It is with these words of extravagant praise that Mr. D. A. Wilson begins a chapter on *The French Revolution.* Other critics are less favorable, pointing out that Carlyle's interpretations were in many cases unsound. But all acknowledge that the work is a very great literary achievement. Carlyle began it in 1834, and the work was published in 1837. The chapters selected for this volume nearly all center about some of the greater personalities of the Revolution, and it is in these that Carlyle did much of his best writing. Moreover, all are from the third volume, which Carlyle regarded as the best.

Page 377. *Place de la Révolution:* Place of the Revolution, where the guillotine had been placed .

Louis: Louis XVI, who became king of France in 1774, was executed on January 21, 1793.

Phalaris: A tyrant in Sicily of the sixth century B.C. who sacrificed human beings in a heated brazen bull.

Page 378. *Lally:* Thomas Arthur Lally, Baron de Tollendal (1702-1766), a French general, who was beheaded unjustly on a charge of treachery.

Clery: Jean Baptiste Clery (1759-1809), attendant on the king and author of a "Journal" published in 1798.

Madame Royale and Madame Elizabeth: The queen and the king's sister.

Page 379. *"Vous êtes tous des scélérats":* "You are all scoundrels."

Malesherbes: Minister under Louis XVI; he was executed in 1794.

Santerre: Antoine Joseph Santerre (1752-1809), commander of the national guard of Paris.

Page 380. *D'Orléans Egalité:* Louis Philippe Joseph, Duc d'Orléans, gave up his title and assumed the name of Philippe Egalité. He was executed in November, 1793.

Page 381. *Roland:* Jean Marie Roland de la Platière (1734-1793), a famous French republican; he committed suicide after the execution of his wife.

Lepelletier Saint-Fargeau: A French politician who had voted for the execution of the king. He was assassinated on the day preceding the execution of Louis.

næniæ: Funeral songs.

Vergniaud: President of the Legislative Assembly.

Page 382. *Fauchet:* Claude Fauchet (1744-1793), a French bishop and revolutionist, was guillotined on October 31, 1793.

Talleyrand: One of the most famous of French diplomats (1754-1838).

the River Scheldt: A river which flows from France through Belgium and Holland and which had fallen into the hands of the French, so that it was possible for the French to threaten England.

Page 383. *At Caen:* In northern France, where the Girondins, a group of moderates, were plotting against the Mountain, the radicals then in control in Paris.

de l'Intendance: Of administration.

Deputy Barbaroux: Charles Jean Marie Barbaroux (1767-1794), a Girondist. He was executed in June, 1794.

Duperret: Also a Girondist. He was guillotined in October, 1793.

Page 384. *Marat:* Jean Paul Marat (1744-1793), an extreme republican and an enemy of the Girondins. He was unrelenting in the prosecution of his enemies.

Page 385. *Pétion . . . Louvet:* Girondists and enemies of Murat.

Stylites: An ascetic of the fifth century who lived for thirty years on a pillar near Antioch. See Tennyson's *St. Simeon Stylites.* Marat was a solitary like St. Simeon.

Chabot: A member of Marat's party. He was guillotined in 1794.

Page 386. *David:* Jacques Louis David (1748-1825), a well-known French painter who was for a time closely associated with the revolutionary party.

Tinville: Antoine Quentin Fouquier-Tinville (1747-1795), the public accuser before the revolutionary tribunal.

Page 387. *Adam Lux:* A Girondist deputy (1766-1793), who wrote a pamphlet in defense of Charlotte Corday and was executed in consequence.

Codrus' sacrifices: Codrus was, according to legend, the last king of Athens. It was prophesied at the time of the Dorian invasion (c. 1068 B.C.) that the Athenians would be saved if the king lost his life at the hands of the enemy. Disguising himself as a peasant, he visited the Dorian camp, provoked a quarrel, and was killed.

Page 389. *Danton:* George Jacques Danton (1759-1794), a famous revolutionary orator and statesman, who played an important part in the revolution until he was overthrown by Robespierre.

Page 390. *Camille:* Camille Desmoulins (1760-1794), revolutionary writer and orator. He was guillotined on April 5, 1794.

Phelippeaux: Antoine de Picard de Phelippeaux (1768-1799), an artillery officer.

Lacroix: A revolutionist (1754-1794), who was arrested with Danton and was executed.

Legendre: Louis Legendre (1752-1797), a revolutionist and popular leader. He became a reactionary after the fall of Robespierre.

Page 391. *Fouquier:* Fouquier-Tinville; see *Tinville,* p. 386.

Saint-Just, Couthon, Lebas: Antoine St. Just (1767-1794), and George Couthon (1756-1794), were members of the Triumvirate with Robespierre and were executed with him. Lebas (1762-1794), also intimately associated with Robespierre, committed suicide rather than fall into the hands of his enemies.

Page 393. *Artillery-Officer at Toulon:* Napoleon Bonaparte.

Hérault Séchelles: A well-known revolutionist (1760-1794), executed with Danton.

Page 395. *Être-Suprême Feast:* Robespierre obtained from the Convention on May 7, 1894, a decree that recognized the existence of the Supreme Being. On June 8 occurred a great feast in honor of the Supreme Being. At the time Robespierre was at the height of his power.

Billaud: Jean Nicolas Billaud-Varenne (1756-1819), one of the revolutionists.

Robespierre: Maximilien Marie Isidore Robespierre (1758-1794) was one of the most ardent and convinced of the revolutionary leaders. His earnestness was the source of his influence. He became the principal leader of the Terror.

Catherine Théot: A Frenchwoman who suffered the delusion that she was to become the mother of a new Messiah. Followers gathered about her who called her the "Mother of God," and some of these declared Robespierre to be the new redeemer of the world. She died in prison in 1794.

Barrère: Barrère de Vieuzac (1755-1841), an unscrupulous revolutionist who easily changed parties.

Sûrcté Générale: [Committee on] General Safety.

Tallien: Jean Lambert Tallien (1767-1820), a vigorous supporter of the Terror, who fell in love with Thérèse, the divorced wife of the Comte de Fontenay and one of his own prisoners. He was suspected of moderatism in consequence, and actually led the attack on Robespierre in order to save himself and Thérèse, who later became his wife.

Polyphemus Cavern: Polyphemus, a one-eyed giant of Greek mythology who kept Ulysses a prisoner in his cave.

Page 396. *Bourdon:* François Louis Bourdon, revolutionist, who opposed Robespierre.

Fréron: Louis Stanislas Fréron (1765-1802), another young revolutionist.

Barras: Paul Jean François Nicolas Barras (1755-1829), a French soldier and revolutionist and the author of memoirs.

General Henriot: Usually spelled *Hanriot* (1761-1794).

He was in command of the troops in Paris and, when Robespierre fell, was executed.

Page 397. *Carnot:* Lazare Nicolas Marguerite Carnot (1753-1823), French statesman and general; war minister (1793-1795).

Page 398. *Collot:* Jean Marie Collot-d'Herbois (1750-1796), a French actor, who became a member of the party of Terror. His popularity is said to have won him the hostility of Robespierre.

Page 400. *Pride's Purge:* In 1648 a military force commanded by Thomas Pride excluded from the English Parliament all members favoring compromise with the royalists.

Brutus: The Roman patriot who assisted in the assassination of Julius Caesar.

Æolus-Hall: Hall of the winds. Æolus was the Greek god of the winds.

Page 401. *Saint-Antoine:* A district of Paris.

Page 403. *Lieutenant-General Loiserolles:* Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities* contains a similar incident, no doubt suggested by this.

Paine: Thomas Paine (1737-1809), who played a part in the American Revolution, was outlawed from England for publishing *The Rights of Man*, became a member of the French National Convention, and was imprisoned in 1794.

Page 404. *Sanhedrim:* A Council of Jews.

Page 405. *moutons:* Prison-spies. Literally, the word means *sheep.*

Page 407. *Post-Sansculottic:* Following the period of extreme revolutionary polices.

Jean Jacques: Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), doctrines influenced Robespierre and other revolutionary leaders. He was the author of *Le Contrat Social* (*The Social Contract*).

Page 408. *fiat and pereat.* "Let it be done" and "Let it perish."

Sieyès: Emmanuel Joseph Sieyès (1748-1836), a French statesman.

Page 409. *Lacretelles, Laharpes:* Jean Charles Dominique de Lacretelle (1766-1855) was a French historian and

journalist. Jean François de Laharpe (1739-1803), critic and dramatist, was editor of a periodical which supported revolutionary principles.

Pichegru: Charles Pichegru (1761-1804) was commander of the army of the North.

Condé: Prince Louis Joseph de Bourbon de Condé (1736-1818), a royalist, was at the head of a corps of emigrants which joined the Austrian army.

Section Lepelletier: A section or district in Paris from 1793 to 1814.

Page 410. *General Menou:* Baron Jacques François de Menou (1750-1810).

Buonaparte: Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821) established his reputation as an officer of resolution by his conduct on this occasion.

Murat: Joachim Murat (1771-1815), who became one of Napoleon's most famous marshals.

Page 411. *Mœnad-march:* The Insurrection of Women on October 5, 1789.

Page 412. *Broglie:* Victor François, Duc de Broglie (1718-1804), French general, who opposed the Revolution.

THE HERO AS A POET

The lectures entitled *Heroes and Hero-Worship* were delivered in London in 1840, the price of the tickets being one guinea each. The series was very successful, many distinguished persons being in the audience. In the following year the lectures were published. The book soon became popular and remains one of the most widely read of Carlyle's works. The thesis was expressed in the first lecture: "For, as I take it, Universal History, the history of what man has accomplished in this world, is at bottom the History of the Great Men who have worked here."

Page 416. *Mirabeau:* The great leader of the French Revolution (1749-1791), who was greatly admired by Carlyle.

Turenne: Vicomte de Turenne (1611-1675), a famous French general under Louis XIV.

Petrarch and Boccaccio: Petrarch (1304-1374) and Boccaccio (1313-1375) were Italian writers. Petrarch's

name is associated with the sonnet, while Boccaccio is remembered as the author of the *Decameron.*

Addison: Joseph Addison (1672-1719) the famous essayist, associated with Steele in the publication of the *Tatler* and the *Spectator.*

Page 417. *Fichte:* See Introduction.

Vauxhall: A fashionable place of amusement in London.

Saxo Grammaticus: A Danish historian (died c. 1208), author of a Latin history which contains the Hamlet story.

Page 422. *Giotto:* A famous Italian artist (1276-1337). The portrait to which Carlyle refers is probably not his. Another portrait, brought to light shortly after Carlyle delivered his lecture, may be Giotto's, however.

Page 423. *Guelf-Ghibelline, Bianchi-Neri:* The Guelphs were supporters of the Pope while the Ghibellines adhered to the Emperor. The Bianchi and Neri were subdivisions of the Guelphs. Dante belonged to the Bianchi.

Page 424. *Can della Scala:* Can Grande della Scala (1291-1329), prince of Verona and patron of Dante.

Page 425. *Malebolge Pool:* Pockets or pits in the eighth circle of Dante's Inferno.

alti guai: Deep groans.

Tieck: Ludwig Tieck (1773-1853), German poet.

Page 426. *canto fermo:* Literally, "fixed song." It is a musical form used by tradition in the Church.

terza rima: The three-line stanza used in the *Divine Comedy.*

Page 427. *Hall of Dite:* In the sixth circle.

Tacitus: The Latin historian (c. 55-c. 117).

Page 428. *Plutus:* In Greek mythology, he represents riches. He stands guard in the fourth circle of Hell, where the avaricious and the prodigal are.

Brunetto Latini: Dante's old teacher.

Farinata . . . Cavalcante: See the *Inferno,* Canto X. The son of Cavalcante was Guido Cavalcante, a poet and Dante's intimate friend.

Page 429. *Francesca:* Francesca da Rimini, whose love for her husband's brother is a familiar story in literature.

della bella persona, che mi fu tolta: Of the beautiful person, who was taken away from me.

Aer bruno: Literally, "brown air."

Page 433. *Agamemnon:* Leader of the Greek forces in the war with Troy.

Mahomet: The hero of Lecture II, "The Hero as Prophet."

Page 434. *Caliph Thrones:* Caliph means "successor" and was the title of the successors of Mahomet.

Page 435. *Warwickshire squire:* Sir Thomas Lucy, who, according to tradition, drove Shakespeare to London by prosecuting him for poaching.

"Tree Igdrasil": Igdrasil is a variant of *Ygdrasill*, which is the name of a giant tree of Norse mythology which supports the universe.

Page 436. *St. Stephen's:* Where Parliament met.

Freemasons' Tavern: Carlyle, with others, met there to found the London Library after the lecture was delivered but before it was sent to the press, and he inserted this reference.

Novum organum: Bacon's famous work.

Page 442. *Wilhelm Meister:* Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*, a novel which Carlyle translated, contains a famous criticism of *Hamlet*.

August Wilhelm Schlegel: German critic (1767-1845).

Marlborough: The Duke of Marlborough (1650-1722), one of the greatest of English generals.

battle of Agincourt: where Henry V won a great victory over the French in 1415. See Shakespeare's *Henry V*, Act IV.

Globe Playhouse: A famous theatre, built in 1599, of which Shakespeare was one of the owners.

Page 443. *disjecta membra:* Scattered parts.

"We are such stuff," etc.: In *Tempest*. The same passage is quoted in *Sartor Resartus*.

That scroll in Westminster Abbey: A statue of Shakespeare in the Poet's Corner of Westminster Abbey has in the left hand a scroll containing the lines to which Carlyle refers.

Page 444. *Earl of Southampton:* A young English nobleman to whom Shakespeare dedicated his poems *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*.

Page 445. *Parametta:* A town in New South Wales.

Page 446. *dumb Russia:* Carlyle did not see that Russia was on the verge of a great literary awakening.

From

PAST AND PRESENT

The spirit in which Carlyle wrote *Past and Present* is revealed in a letter to his friend, John Sterling, written a few weeks before its publication. "This thing I am upon is a volume to be called 'Past and Present.' It is moral, political, historical, etc.; a most questionable, redhot, indignant thing: for my heart is sick to look at the things now going on in this England; and two millions of men sitting in Poor-Law Bastilles seem to ask every English soul, 'Hast thou no word to say to us?'" In other words, Carlyle was deeply moved by the poverty and distress of the time, and wrote the book to do something toward remedying conditions. The "Past" which is suggested in the title refers to the life of mediaeval England which he studied in the *Chronicle of Jocelyn of Brakelond,* and which he used as a basis for his criticism of modern England.

Page 440. *Midas:* The legendary king who was granted the gift of turning into gold whatever he touched, with disastrous consequences. Carlyle used it to symbolize the wealth of England, with its failure to bring comfort or happiness to the masses.

Page 450. *the picturesque Tourist:* Carlyle had visited St. Ives in 1842 and is of course referring to himself.

Page 451. *Dr. Alison:* Dr. William Pulteney Alison (1790-1859).

Potosi: A mountain in Bolivia, famous for its mineral wealth.

Stockport Assizes: Court sessions at Stockport, a city near Manchester.

Page 452. *Ugolino:* An Italian leader of the thirteenth century whose story appears in Dante's *Inferno.* He died, with four sons, in prison, starved to death.

Page 453. *Corn-law:* The Corn Laws regulated the grain trade of England and were the cause of much agitation.

Page 454. *Olympians:* According to one legend, Midas decided a musical contest against Apollo, one of the Olympian deities, and his ears were changed to those of an ass in consequence.

Page 457. *Sir Christopher:* Sir Christopher Wren (1632-1723), the English architect who designed St. Paul's Cathedral in London.

Nell-Gwyn Defenders of the Faith: One of the titles of the King of England is "Defender of the Faith." Carlyle refers to Charles II, a licentious sovereign, one of whose mistresses was Nell Gwyn.

Page 458. *Gideon:* See Judges 4:36-40.

Ursa Major: The constellation of the Great Bear in the northern heavens.

Page 460. *Antinomians:* Persons who hold that the moral law is not obligatory under the Gospel dispensation.

Spinning Dervishes: See page 315 and note.

Talfourd-Mahon Copyrights: The Copyright Act of 1842. Sir Thomas Noon Talfourd and Lord Mahon were influential supporters of the measure.

Page 461. *Kepler:* See page 342 and note.

Mayfair: A fashionable part of London.

Page 462. *Samuel:* Dr. Johnson, who often expressed regret for his idleness

In St. Stephen's: In Parliament.

Owen's Labour-bank: Planned by Robert Owen (1771-1858), but not achieved.

Downing-street: Official residence of the English First Lord of the Treasury, who is also Prime Minister.

Page 464. *Mothers:* Supernatural beings in Goethe's *Faust.*

Manes: Inhabitants of the lower world.

Lubberlands: Lubberland is an imaginary place of idleness and luxury.

Acheron: A river in Hades.

Eccovi l'uom, etc.: Behold the man who has been in hell.

Eurydice: The wife of Orpheus. After her death Orpheus went to Hades and by the power of his music won permission to take her back to earth, but failed to observe the condition that he should not look back.

Page 465. *Mammon:* Symbolizing greed.

Plugson of Undershot: Carlyle's name for the successful capitalist and employer of labor.

Page 466. *Antæus:* A mythical Greek giant who could not be overcome while his feet touched the earth.

Civil-List: A list of persons supported by the government.

Goulburn-Baring Budget: Henry Goulburn was Chancellor of the Exchequer 1841-1846 and Sir Francis Thornhill Baring was Chancellor 1839-1841. The Chancellor prepares the budget for the government.

Page 468. *Laissez-faire:* The name applied to the theory of non-interference of government in business, labor relations, etc.

Page 469. *Villani, bordarii, sochemanni:* Members of various lower ranks of society among the Anglo-Saxons.

Phalaris' Bull: See page 92 and note.

Chartisms: The Chartists were a group of radical reformers whose principles were stated in a document called the National, or People's, Charter. They were active when Carlyle was writing *Past and Present.*

Revolts of Three Days: This refers to the Revolution of 1830 in France, which was the result of fighting that lasted three days.

Lord or Law-ward: Carlyle's etymology is wrong. The Anglo-Saxon words are *hlāf-weard,* loaf or bread-keeper.

Lady . . . Hlaf-dig: The probable meaning of the original words is loaf-kneader.

Page 470. *Black Dahomey:* A kingdom in West Africa; later it became a French colony.

Mungo Park: An African explorer (1771-1806).

Gurth . . . Cedric the Saxon: Characters in Scott's *Ivanhoe.*

Page 471. *Tancred of Hauteville:* A famous crusader (d. 1112).

Page 472. *Hereward:* An English outlaw in the time of William the Conqueror.

Earl of Waltheof: Earl of Northumbria. He was executed in 1076 for conspiring against William the Conqueror.

"Par la Splendeur de Dieu!": "By the Splendor of God!" the favorite oath of William the Conqueror.

Page 473. *Joe-Manton:* Joseph Manton (c. 1766-1835), an English gunsmith and inventor of improvements for firearms.

Wahngasse of Weissnichtwo: See p. 370.

Page 474. *Cheruscan:* One of the ancient German tribe of Cherusci.

Page 475. *Windsor Georges:* Royal decorations; specifically, the George is a jewel "appended to the collar of the Order of the Garter."

Page 477. *Pococurantism:* Indifference.

Beau-Brummelism: See p. 152.

Page 480. *Jötuns: Giants of Norse Mythology.*

Page 481. *Epicurisms:* Epicureanism, the doctrine that the end of life is happiness or pleasure.

Lethe: The river of forgetfulness in Hades.

Page 482. *Manchester Insurrections:* Manchester was a center of agitation for the working classes. In 1819 occurred the "Manchester Massacre," in which soldiers charged a crowd and killed a number of persons.

Hansard's-Jargon: Parliamentary speeches, as reported in publication of which various members of the Hansard family were at different times printers.

Page 483. *Jean-Paul:* Jean Paul Richter. See p. 58 and note.

Page 484. *Ægir:* God of the ocean in Norse mythology.

Thor: The Norse god of thunder.

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